

Class PN 4201
Book B43

2464
4461

THE

SPEAKERS' LIBRARY

THE LATEST AND MOST POPULAR LITERARY GEMS FOR PUBLIC AND PARLOR ENTERTAINMENT.

SELECTED BY THE LEADING ELOCUTIONISTS AND READERS OF THE COUNTRY.

EDITED BY

DAPHNE DALE.

C.T. Beezley

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, COPYRIGHT MAY 2 1890 9114 WASHINGTON.

1890.

ELLIOTT & BEEZLEY,

CHICAGO—PHILADELPHIA.

PN4201
B43

Copyright 1890.
by
Elliott & Beezley.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE SPEAKERS' LIBRARY starts on its mission. The aim has been to gather into one volume all the latest and most popular literary selections for the use of elocutionists and public speakers. That it will meet the approval of the critic has not been considered, but rather that it will please and entertain the masses.

A speaker compiled by any one person, no matter how well informed, must, of necessity, partake of the individuality and tastes of the compiler, and to the extent that his likes and dislikes are biased from those of the composite public, must it fall short of what it should be. To avoid an error of this nature, and to insure THE SPEAKERS' LIBRARY the highest degree of merit, ***more than one hundred elocutionists*** have been consulted and asked to contribute such selections as they find most popular with their audiences. This volume is the result.

The many sources from which its contents have been gleaned insure it variety, merit and, above all, guarantee everything in its pages suitable for audiences of *to-day*- nothing thread-bare. It requires no greater effort to memorize a selection of acknowledged reputation than one of doubtful merit. The value of such a volume as this is at once apparent. It becomes a never failing source to draw from the best, the very cream of the language, and makes the selecting of an appropriate recitation for any class of entertainment an easy matter.

Much of the credit due for the successful completion of this task must be given where it belongs, to the friends who have so freely assisted in the work.

DAPHNE DALE.

CONTENTS.

Artie's Amen.....*Paul Hamilton Hayne* 158
An Old Man's Story.....*Milton Hamilton* 222
Agnes, I Love Thee..... 328
Ain't He Cute 348
An Original Love Story..... 349
After the Theater..... 349
At the Garden Gate..... 360
Arithmetic Lesson, The..... 395

Babies and Kittens.....*Lizzie M. Hadley* 34
Beacon Light..... 43
Best of Husbands 45
Briar Rose.....*Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen* 66
Better in the Morning.....*Rev. Leander S. Coan* 111
Bridgekeeper's Story.....*W. A. Eaton* 121
Back Where They Used to Be.....*J. W. Riley* 154
Brakeman Goes to Church.....*Robt. Burdett* 177
Burial of Moses, The.....*Cecil Francis Alexander* 274
Bore, The 322
Ballad of a Butcher, The 329
Bad Prayers.....*Bronson Alcott* 333
Bugle Song.....*Alfred Tennyson* 353
Biggest Piece of Pie, The 384

Clown's Baby, The.....*Margaret Vandegrift* 40
Convict Joe.....*A. G. Murdock* 125
Candor..... 131
Chickens Come Home to Roost.....*Ernest McGaffey* 152
Christ and the Little Ones..... 204
Cane-bottomed Chair, The.....*W. M. Thackeray* 272
Closing Scene, The.....*T. Buchanan Read* 286
Christmas Baby, The.....*Will Carleton* 114

Dukite Snake, The.....*J. Boyle O'Reilly* 20
Deserter, A.....*Mary A. Barr* 186
"Dead! Name Unknown."..... .....*Horace B. Durant* 192
Dead Doll, The..... .....*Margaret Vandegrift* 202
Dream of Eugene Aram.....*Thomas Hood* 234
Dermot O'Dowd 363
Dead Kitten, The.....*Sydney Dayre* 385

Every Year.....*Albert Pike* 51
Eleventh Hour, The.....*Anna L. Ruth* 88
Elf-Child, The.....*James W. Riley* 129
Evening at the Farm.....*J. T. Trowbridge* 166
Expecting to Get Even 230

Failed..... 30
Face Against the Pane.....*T. B. Aldrich* 86
Farmer's Ben's Theory..... 116
First Snow-Fall, The.....*James R. Lowell* 249
Fall of Pemberton Mill.....*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps* 258
Fate of Virginia.....*T. B. Macaulay* 296
Foreign Views of the Statue.....*Fred Emerson Brooks* 304
Fate.....*Bret Harte* 347
First Cloud, The..... 350
From Hand to Mouth..... 351

Good Night, Papa 13
Guilty or Not Guilty 36
Gray Swan, The ..... *Alice Cary* 58
Green Apples ..... *J. T. Trowbridge* 276
Grandpapa's Spectacles 379
Grandpapa's Spectacles 388
Good Night 397
Gracie's Temper 400

Hindoo's Paradise 35
How He Saved St. Michael's ..... *M. A. P. Stansbury* 82
How Mickey Got Kilt in the War 182
Hannah Binding Shoes ..... *Lucy Larcom* 206
Here She Goes—and There She Goes ..... *James Nack* 227
How Ruby Played 250
He Never Told a Lie 354
Horatius at the Bridge ..... *T. B. Macaulay* 367

I Have Drank My Last Glass 80
"I Wouldn't—Would You?" 162
I Vash So Glad I Vash Here 172
In Answer ..... *Rose Hartwick Thorp* 338
In the Catacombs ..... *H. H. Ballard* 340

Jesus, Lover of My Soul ..... *Eugene J. Hall* 72
Justice In Leadville ..... *Helen Hinsdale Rich* 197
Johnnie's Opinion of Grandmothers ..... *Ethel Lynn Beers* 390

Keeping His Word 18
King and Peasant 46
Kentucky Philosophy ..... *Harrison Robertson* 243

Leak in the Dyke, A ..... *Phoebe Carey* 25
Lost and Found ..... *Hamilton Hide* 102

Little Joe's Flowers..... 106
Leadville Jim.....*W. W. Fink* 108
Legend of the Organ-Builder.....*Julia C. R. Dorr* 132
Little White Hearse.....*J. W. Riley* 154
Little Graves.....*Lillie Surbridge Curry* 188
Lasca.....*F. Desprez* 218
Little Rid Hin.....*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney* 232
Little Black-Eyed Rebel, The.....*Will Carleton* 264
Little Hero, The.....*Mathison* 280
Land of the Afternoon 323
Lovely Scene, A..... 332
Lulu's Complaint..... 389
Little Miss Briar..... 398

My Choice 23
Master Johnnie's Next Door Neighbor.....*Bret Harte* 32
Midshipmite, The.....*Clement Scott* 148
Mother's Fool..... 279
My Neighbor's Baby..... 303
Maud Muller's Moving..... 331
Milking-Time.....*Philip Morse* 345
Mamma's Kisses..... 392

Nothing..... 90
Nearer to Thee.....*I. Edgar Jones* 156
Nothin' To Say.....*J. W. Riley* 160
No Sects in Heaven.....*E. H. J. Cleaveland* 214
Not Willin'..... 330
No Kiss.....*Madge Elliott* 358

One of the Little Ones.....*Geo. L. Catlin* 63
Old Farmer Gray Gets Photographed 184
Old Man Goes to Town, The.....*J. G. Swinerton* 245

Old Wife's Kiss, The..... 288
One Day Solitary.....*J. T. Trowbridge* 291
Only a Smile.....*Florence McCurdy* 328
Only Playing..... 342
Open Door, The..... 361
One Little Act..... 380
Off for Slumber-Land.....*Caroline Evans* 394
Only a Boy..... 399

Pilot's Story, The. .....*W. D. Howells* 53
Praying for Shoes.....*Paul Hamilton Hayne* 74
Pride of Battery B.....*F. H. Gassaway* 137
Papa's Letter 164
Paddy's Excelsior..... 241
Punkin Frost, The.....*B. F. Johnson* 298
Procrustes' Bed.....*Carlotta Perry* 300
Paddy's Reflection on Cleopatra's Needle.....*Cormac O'Leary* 308
Pharisee and Sadducee..... 325
Polonius to Laertes 325
Persuasive Agent, The..... 325
Parody, A..... 343
Parson's Sociable, The 352
Persevere..... 387

Rock of Ages..... 38
Ride of Jennie McNeal.....*Will Carleton* 97
Reason Why, The.....*Katherine H. Terry* 143
Railroad Crossing, The.....*Hezekiah Strong* 307
Recipe for a Modern Novel..... 334
Rogue, A..... 379

Shadows 16
Spinning-Wheel Song.....*John Francis Waller* 29
Silver and Gold..... 50

Somebody's Mother..... 60
Stray Sunbeam, The.....*Frank M. Gilbert* 117
Sunday Fishin'.....*Harrison Robertson* 139
Something to Say.....*C. N. Hood* 161
St. John, The Aged..... 168
Searching for the Slain..... 174
Simple Sign, A..... 332
Saddest Sight, The..... 354
Similar Case, A..... 364
September Gale, A.....*Oliver Wendell Holmes* 365
Six Years Old..... 381
Story of an Apple, A.....*Sydney Dayre* 384

Too Many of We..... 62
Trouble in the Amen Corner.....*T. C. Harbaugh* 92
Theology in the Quarters..... 96
Two..... 145
Tom.....*Constance F. Woolson* 195
Tom's Little Star.....*Fannie Foster* 207
Tramp, The.....*George M. Baker* 267
Tommy's Prayer.....*John F. Nichols* 310
Thirty-second Day, The.....*S. W. Foss* 319
Tale of a Tadpole, The..... 327
Total Annihilation.....*Mary D. Brine* 344
Three Fiends, The.....*Robt. Burdett* 357
Tale of a Nose.....*Chas. F. Adams* 359
Thanksgiving Day.....*Lydia Maria Child* 396

Unpardonable Sin, The..... 321
Unsatisfied.....*Adelaide G. Waters* 382
Unfinished Prayer, The..... 383

Victuals and Drink.....*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney* 346

What Bessie Saw.....*Carrie W. Bronson* 76
Wounded Soldier.....*J. W. Watson* 77
What Became of a Lie.....*Mrs. M. A. Ridder* 120
What Was His Creed?..... 256
World, The.....*Ella Wheeler Wilcox* 315
Waltz-Quadrille, The.....*Ella Wheeler Wilcox* 335
Where are Wicked Folks Buried?..... 334
Way of the World, The.....*F. E. Weatherly* 337
What is Heaven?..... 352
Whistler, The..... 356
What She Said.....*Sarah De Wolf Gamwell* 377
Which Loved Best?.....*Foy Allison* 387
Why the Dog's Nose is Always Cold..... 393

Youngest Tells Her Story, The.....*M. E. W* 391

THE SPEAKER'S LIBRARY.

"GOOD-NIGHT, PAPA."

THE words of a blue-eyed child as she kissed her chubby hand and looked down the stairs, "Good-night, papa; Jessie see you in the morning."

It came to be a settled thing, and every evening, as the mother slipped the white night-gown over the plump shoulders, the little one stopped on the stairs and sang out, "Good-night, papa," and as the father heard the silvery accents of the child, he came, and taking the cherub in his arms, kissed her tenderly, while the mother's eyes filled, and a swift prayer went up, for, strange to say, this man, who loved his child with all the warmth of his great, noble nature, had one fault to mar his manliness. From his youth he loved the wine cup. Genial in spirit, and with a fascination of manner that won him friends, he could not resist when surrounded by his boon com-

panions. Thus his home was darkened, the heart of his wife bruised and bleeding, the future of his child shadowed.

Three years had the winsome prattle of the baby crept into the avenues of the father's heart, keeping him closer to his home, but still the fatal cup was in his hand. Alas for frail humanity, insensible to the calls of love! With unutterable tenderness God saw there was no other way; this father was dear to Him, the purchase of his Son; He could not see him perish, and, calling a swift messenger, He said, "Speed thee to earth and bring the babe."

"Good-night, papa," sounded from the stairs. What was there in the voice? Was it the echo of the mandate, "Bring me the babe"—a silvery plaintive sound, a lingering music that touched the father's heart, as when a cloud crosses the sun? "Good-night, my darling;" but his lips quivered and his broad brow grew pale. "Is Jessie sick, mother? Her cheeks are flushed, and her eyes have a strange light."

"Not sick," and the mother stooped to kiss the flushed brow; "she may have played too much. Pet is not sick?"

"Jessie tired, mamma; good-night, papa; Jessie see you in the morning."

"That is all, she is only tired," said the mother, as she took the small hand. Another kiss, and the father turned away; but his heart was not satisfied.

Sweet lullabies were sung; but Jessie was restless and could not sleep. "Tell me a story, mamma"; and the mother told of the blessed babe that Mary cradled, following along the story till the child has grown to walk and play. The blue, wide-open eyes filled with a strange

light, as though she saw and comprehended more than the mother knew.

That night the father did not visit the saloon; tossing on his bed, starting from a feverish sleep and bending over the crib, the long, weary hours passed. Morning revealed the truth — Jessie was smitten with the fever.

"Keep her quiet," the doctor said; "a few days of good nursing, and she will be all right."

Words easily said; but the father saw a look on the sweet face such as he had seen before. He knew the message was at the door.

Night came. "Jessie is sick; can't say good-night, papa"; and the little clasping fingers clung to the father's hand.

"O God, spare her! I cannot, cannot bear it!" was wrung from his suffering heart.

Days passed; the mother was tireless in her watching. With her babe cradled in her arms her heart was slow to take in the truth, doing her best to solace the father's heart: "A light case! the doctor says, 'Pet will soon be well.'"

Calmly, as one who knows his doom, the father laid his hand upon the hot brow, looked into the eyes even then covered with the film of death, and with all the strength of his manhood cried, "Spare her, O God! spare my child, and I will follow thee."

With a last painful effort the parched lips opened: "Jessie's too sick; can't say good-night, papa—in the morning." There was a convulsive shudder, and the clasping fingers relaxed their hold; the messenger had taken the child.

Months have passed. Jessie's crib stands by the side of

her father's couch; her blue embroidered dress and white hat hang in his closet; her boots with the print of the feet just as she last worn them, as sacred in his eyes as they are in the mother's. Not dead, but merely risen to a higher life; while, sounding down from the upper stairs, "Good-night, papa, Jessie see you in the morning," has been the means of winning to a better way one who had shown himself deaf to every former call.

SHADOWS.

WE stood where the snake-like ivy
Climbed over the meadow bars,
And watched as the young night sprinkled
The sky with her cream-white stars.
The clover was red beneath us,
The air had the smell of June,
The cricket chirped in the grasses,
And the soft rays of the moon

Drew our shadows on the meadow,
Distorted and lank and tall;
His shadow was kissing my shadow
That was the best of all.
My heart leaped up as he whispered
"I love you, Margery Lee,"
For then one arm of his shadow
Went round the shadow of me.

"I love you, Margery darling,
Because you are young and fair,
For your eyes' bewildering blueness,

And the gold in your curling hair.
No queen has hands that are whiter,
No lark has a voice so sweet,
And your ripe young lips are redder
Than the clover at your feet."

"My heart will break with its fullness,
Like a cloud o'ercharged with rain;
Oh, tell me, Margery darling,
How long must we love in vain!
With blushes and smiles I answered
(I will not tell what); just then
I saw that his saucy shadow
Was kissing my own again.

He promised to love me only—
I promised to love but him,
Till the moon rose out of the heavens,
And the stars with age grew dim,
Oh! The strength of man's devotion!
Oh! the vows a woman speaks!
Tis years since that blush of rapture
Broke redly over my cheeks.

He found a gold that was brighter
Than that in my floating curls,
And married a cross-eyed widow,
With a dozen grown up girls.
And I—did I pine and languish?
Did I weep my blue eyes sore?
Or break my heart, do you fancy,
For a love that was mine no more?

I stand to-night in the meadows,
Where Harry and I stood then,

And the moon has drawn two shadows
Out over the grass again;
And a low voice keeps repeating—
So close to my startled ear
That the shadows melt together—
"I love you, Margery dear.'

"'Tis not for your cheeks' rich crimson,
And not your eyes so blue,
But because your heart is tender
And noble and good and true."
The voice is dearer than Harry's,
And so I am glad, you see,
He married the cross-eyed widow
Instead of Margery Lee.

KEEPING HIS WORD.

"ONLY a penny a box," he said,
But the gentleman turned away his head,
As if he shrank from the squalid sight
Of the boy who stood in the fading light.
"Oh, sir!" he stammered, "you cannot know,"
And he brushed from his matches the flakes of snow,
That the sudden tear might have chance to fall.
"Or I think—I think you would take them all.
Hungry and cold at our garret pane,
Ruby will watch till I come again,
Bringing the loaf. The sun has set,
And he hasn't a crumb of breakfast yet.
One penny, and then I can buy the bread!"

The gentleman stopped: "And you?" he said;
I? I can put up with them,—hunger and cold
But Ruby is only five years old.
I promised our mother before she went,—
She knew I would do it, and died content,—
I promised her, sir, through best, through worst,
I always would think of Ruby first."
The gentleman paused at his open door,
Such tales he had often heard before;
But he fumbled his purse in the twilight drear,
"I have nothing less than a shilling here."
"Oh, sir, if you'll only take the pack,
I'll bring you the change in a moment back,
Indeed you may trust me!" "Trust you?—no—
But here is the shilling, take it and go."
The gentleman lolled in his easy chair,
And watched his cigar wreath melt in air,
And smiled on his children, and rose to see
The baby asleep on its mother's knee.
"And now it is nine by the clock," he said,
"Time that my darlings were all abed;
Kiss me good-night, and each be sure,
When you're saying your prayers, remember the poor."
Just then came a message, "A boy at the door,"
But ere it was uttered he stood on the floor,
Half breathless, bewildered, and ragged and strange;
"I am Ruby, Mike's brother; I've brought you the change.
Mike's hurt, sir; 'twas dark, and the snow made him blind,
And he didn't take notice the train was behind,
Till he slipped on the track; and then it whizzed by;
He's home in the garret, I think he will die.
Yet nothing would do him, sir, nothing would do,

But out through the storm, I must hurry to you.
Of his hurt he was certain you wouldn't have heard,
And so you might think he had broken his word."
When the garret they hastily entered and saw,
Two arms, mangled, helpless, out-stretched from the straw;
"You did it,—dear Ruby!—God bless you!" he said,
And the boy, gladly smiling, sank back, and was—dead.

THE DUKITE SNAKE.

WELL, mate, you've asked me about a fellow
You met to-day in a black and yellow
Chain-gang suit, with a pedler's pack,
Or with some such burden strapped to his back.
Did you meet him square? No, passed you by?
Well, if you had, and had looked in his eye,
You'd have felt for your irons then and there;
For the light of his eye is a madman's glare.
Some eight years back, in the spring of the year,
He came from Scotland and settled here.
A splendid young fellow he was just then,
And one of the bravest and truest of men.
In a year his wife came, and he showed her round
His sandalwood and his crops in the ground,
And spoke of the future; they cried for joy,
The husband's arm clasping his wife and boy.

Well, friend, if a little of heaven's best bliss
Ever comes from the upper world to this,
It came into that manly bush man's life,
And circled him round with the arms of his wife.

God bless that bright memory! Even to me,
A rough, lonely man, did she seem to be,
While living, an angel of God's pure love,
And now I could pray to her face above.
And David—he loved her as only a man
With a heart as large as was his heart, can.
I wondered how they could have lived apart,
For he was her idol, and she was his heart.

Friend, there isn't much more of the tale to tell;
I was talking of angels awhile since. Well,
Now I'll change to a devil,—ay, to a devil!
You needn't start; if a spirit of evil
Ever came to this world its hate to slake
On mankind, it came as a dukite snake.
Now, mark you, these dukites don't go alone;
There's another near when you see but one;
And beware you of killing that one you see
Without finding the other; for you may be
More than twenty miles from the spot that night,
When camped, but you're tracked by the lone dukite,
That will follow your trail like death or fate,
And kill you as sure as you killed its mate.

Well, poor Dave Sloane had his young wife here
Three months; 'twas just this time of the year.
He had teamed some sandalwood to the Vasse,
And was homeward bound, when he saw on the grass
A long red snake; he had never been told
Of the dukite's ways; he jumped to the road,
And smashed its flat head with the bullock goad.
He was proud of the red skin, so he tied
Its tail to the cart, and the snake's blood dyed

The bush on the path he followed that night.
He was early home, and the dead dukite
Was flung at the door to be skinned next day.
At sunrise next morning he started away
To hunt up his cattle. A three hours' ride
Brought him back; he gazed on his home with pride
And joy in his heart; he jumped from his horse
And entered—to look on his young wife's corse,
And his dead child clutching its mother's clothes
As in fright; and there, as he gazed, arose,
From her breast, where 'twas resting, the gleaming head
Of the terrible dukite, as if it said,
"I've had vengeance, my foe! you took all I had!"
And so had the snake: David Sloane was mad!

I rode to his hut just by chance that night,
And there on the threshold the clear moonlight
Showed the two snakes dead. I pushed in the door;
The dead were stretched on the moonlit floor;
The man held the hand of his wife, his pride,
His poor life's treasure, and crouched by her side.
I touched and called him; he heeded me not;
So I dug her grave in a quiet spot,
And lifted them both, her boy on her breast
And laid them down in the shade to rest.
Then I tried to take my poor friend away,
But he cried so woefully, "Let me stay
Till she comes again!" that I had no heart
To try to persuade him then to part
From all that was left to him here,—her grave;
So I staid by his side that night, and save
One heart-cutting cry, he uttered no sound,—

O, God ! that wail—like the wail of a hound !
'Tis six long years since I heard that cry,
But 'twill ring in my ears till the day I die.
Since that fearful night no one has heard
Poor David Sloane utter sound or word.
You have seen to-day how he always goes;
He's been given that suit of convict's clothes
By some prison officer. On his back
You noticed a load like a pedler's pack ?
Well, that's what he lives for; when reason went,
Still memory lived, for his days are spent
In searching for dukites; year by year
That bundle of skins is growing. 'Tis clear
That the Lord out of evil some good still takes;
For he's clearing this bush of the dukite snakes.

MY CHOICE.

WHICH of the two do you love best?
Was the question that came to me,
As robed for the night in snowy white
My darlings knelt by me.

Which if the Father's hand
Were to beckon one away,
And the summons be "Thy best beloved,"
Which of them would you say?

And I drew my little ones closer,
As I sat in the twilight dim;
As I wondered, if He were to ask,
What I should answer Him.

Maude is gentle and loving,
With willing hands and feet,
With curious thoughts and questions wise,
With womanly ways and sweet.

And roguish hazel-eyed Minnie
The willing baby yet,
Though over her head of golden brown
Three summers' suns have set.

One so serious and thoughtful,
With wisdom beyond her years
The other like April sunshine,
Ready with smiles and tears.

Now as they kneel before me,
In the suddenly quiet room,
While the shadows deepen and darken
Into the evening gloom,

The childish voices petition
As they fold their hands in prayer,
The heavenly hand to lead them
The heavenly love to care.

Then, as they throw around me
Their arms, and clasp me tight,
The sweet lips murmur, "We love you,
Good-night, mamma, good-night."

I cannot choose between them,
Father! oh spare the test;
Which of my darlings is dearer,
Which one I love the best.

A LEAK IN THE DIKE.

(*Abridged.*)

THE good dame looked from her cottage
At the close of the pleasant day,
And cheerily called to her little son
Outside the door at play:
"Come, Harold, come! I want you to go
While there is light to see,
To the hut of the blind old man who lives
Across the dike, for me;
And take these cakes I made for him;
They are hot and smoking yet;
You have time enough to go and come
Before the sun is set."
And Harold left the brother,
With whom all day he had played,
And the sister who had watched their sports.
In the willow's tender shade.
And now, with his face all glowing,
And eyes as bright as the day
With the thoughts of his pleasant errand
He trudged along the way;
And soon the joyous prattle
Made glad a lonesome place.
Alas! if only the blind old man
Could have seen that happy face!
Yet, he somehow caught the brightness
Which that voice and presence lent;
And he felt the sunshine come and go
As Harold came and went.

And now, as the day was sinking
And the winds began to rise,
The mother looked from her door again,
Shading her anxious eyes;
And saw the shadows deepen,
And the birds to their homes come back;
But never a sign of Harold
Along the level track.
But she said: "He will come at morning,
So I need not fret or grieve;
Though it isn't like my boy at all
To stay without my leave."
But where was the child delaying?
On the homeward way was he,
And across the dike while the sun was up
An hour above the sea.
He was stopping now to gather some flowers,
Now, listening to the sound
As the angry waters dashed themselves
Against their narrow bound.
"Ah! well for us," said Harold
That the gates are good and strong,
And my father tends them carefully,
Or they would not hold you long!
But hark! Through the noise of waters
Comes a low, clear, trickling sound;
And the child's face pales with terror,
And his blossoms drop to the ground.
He is up the bank in a moment,
And, stealing through the sand,
He sees a stream not yet as large
As his slender, childish hand.

Tis a leak in the dike! He is but a boy,
Unused to fearful scenes,
But, young as he is, he has learned to know
The dreadful thing that means.
A leak in the dike! The stoutest heart
Grows faint that cry to hear,
And the bravest man in all the land
Turns white with mortal fear.
And the boy! He has seen the danger,
And, shouting a wild alarm,
He forces back the weight of the sea
With the strength of his single arm.
He listens for the joyful sound
Of a foot step passing nigh,
And lays his ear to the ground to catch
The answer to his cry.
And he hears the rough winds blowing,
And the waters rise and fall,
But never an answer comes to him,
Save the echo of his call.
He sees no hope, no succor
His feeble voice is lost;
Yet what shall he do but watch and wait,
Though he perish at his post?
He thinks of his brother and sister,
Asleep in their safe, warm bed;
He thinks of his father and mother, —
Of himself as dying and dead;
And of how, when the night is over,
They must come and find him at last,
But he never thinks he can leave the place
Where duty holds him fast.

The good dame in the cottage
  Is up and astir with the light,
For the thought of her little Harold
  Has been with her all the night.
And now she watches the pathway,
  As yester-eve she had done;
But, what does she see so strange and black
  Against the rising sun?
Her neighbors are bearing between them
  Something so straight to her door;
Her child is coming home, but not
  As he ever came before!
"He is dead!" she cries: "my darling!"
  And the startled father hears,
And comes and looks the way she looks,
  And fears the thing she fears:
Till a glad shout from the bearers
  Thrills the stricken man and wife;
"Give thanks, for your son has saved our land
  And God has saved his life!"
So, there in the morning sunshine
  They knelt about the boy;
And every head was bared and bent
  In tearful, reverent joy.
They have many a valiant hero,
  Remembered through the years,
But never one whose name so oft
  Is named with loving tears.
And his deed shall be sung at the cradle.
  And told to the child on the knee,
So long as the dikes of Holland
  Divide the land from the sea!

THE SPINNING-WHEEL SONG.

MELLOW the moonlight to shine is beginning;
Close by the window young Eileen is spinning;
Bent o'er the fire, her blind grandmother, sitting,
Is crooning, and moaning, and drowsily knitting, —
"Eileen, achora, I hear some one tapping."
"'Tis the ivy, dear mother, against the glass flapping."
"Eileen, I surely hear somebody sighing."
"'Tis the sound, mother dear, of the summer-wind dying."

Merrily, cheerily, noisily whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the reel, while the foot's stirring;
Sprightly, and lightly, and airily ringing,
Thrills the sweet song that the young maiden is singing.
"What's that noise I hear at the window, I wonder?"
"'Tis the little birds chirping the holly bush under."
"'What makes you be shoving and moving your stool on,
And singing all wrong that old song of the Coolun'?"

There's a form at the casement — the form of her true love, —
And he whispers, with face bent, "I'm waiting for you, love;
Get up on the stool, through the lattice step lightly,
We'll rove in the grove while the moon's shining brightly."

Merrily, cheerily, noisily whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the reel, while the foot's stirring.
Sprightly, and lightly, and airily ringing,
Trills the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.
The maid shakes her head, on her lip lays her fingers.
Steals up from her seat—longs to go, and yet lingers;

A frightened glance turns to her drowsy grandmother,
Puts one foot on the stool, spins the wheel with the other.

Lazily, easily swings now the wheel round;
Slowly and lowly is heard now the reel's sound,
Noiseless and light to the lattice above her
The maid steps—then leaps to the arms of her lover.
Slower—and slower—and slower the wheel swings;
Lower—and lower—and lower the reel rings;
Ere the reel and the wheel stop their ringing and moving,
Through the grove the young lovers by moonlight are roving.

FAILED.

YES, I'm a ruined man, Kate—everything gone at last;
Nothing to show for the trouble and toil of the weary years that are past;
Houses and lands and money have taken wings and fled;
This very morning I signed away the roof from over my head.

I shouldn't care for myself, Kate; I'm used to the world's rough ways;
I've dug and delved and plodded along through all my manhood days;
But I think of you and the children, and it almost breaks my heart;
For I thought so surely to give my boys and girls a splendid start.

So many years on the ladder, I thought I was near the top—

Only a few days longer, and then I expected to stop,
And put the boys in my place, Kate, with an easier life ahead:
But now I must give the prospect up; that comforting dream is dead.

"I am worth more than my gold, eh?" You're good to look at it so;
But a man isn't worth very much, Kate, when his hair is turning to snow.
My poor little girls, with their soft white hands, and their innocent eyes of blue,
Turned adrift in the heartless world—what can and what will they do?

"An honest failure?" Indeed it was; dollar for dollar was paid;
Never a creditor suffered, whatever people have said.
Better are rags and a conscience clear than a palace and flush of shame.
One thing I shall leave to my children, Kate; and that is an honest name.

What's that? "The boys are not troubled, they are ready now to begin
And gain us another fortune, and work through thick and thin?"
The noble fellows! already I feel I haven't so much to bear;
Their courage has lightened my heavy load of misery and despair.

"And the girls are so glad it was honest; they'd rather not dress so fine,
And think they did it with money that wasn't honestly mine?"

They're ready to show what they're made of—quick to earn and to save—
My blessed, good little daughters! so generous and so brave!

And you think we needn't fret, Kate, while we have each other left,
No matter of what possessions our lives may be bereft?
You are right. With a quiet conscience, and a wife so good and true,
I'll put my hand to the plow again; and I know that we'll pull through.

MASTER JOHNNY'S NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR.

IT was spring the first time that I saw her, for her papa and mamma moved in
Next door, just as skating was over and marbles about to begin,
For the fence in our back yard was broken, and I saw, as I peeked through the slat,
There were Johnny-jump-ups all around her, and I knew it was spring just by that.

I never knew whether she saw me, for she didn't say nothing to me,
But "Ma! here's a slat in the fence broke, and the boy that is next door can see."
But the next day I climbed on our wood-shed, as you know mamma says I've a right,
And she calls out, "Well, peekin' is manners!" and I answered her, "Sass is perlite."

But I wasn't a bit mad; no, papa, and to prove it, the very next day
When she ran past our fence in the morning I happened to get in her way,
For you know I am "chunked" and clumsy, as she says are all boys of my size,
And she nearly upset me, she did, pa, and laughed till tears came in her eyes.

And then we were friends from that moment, for I knew that she told Kitty Sage—
And she wasn't a girl that would flatter—that she thought I was tall for my age.
And I gave her four apples that evening, and took her to ride on my sled,
And—*what am I telling you this for?* Why, papa, my neighbor is *dead!*

You don't hear one-half I am saying—I really do think it's too bad!
Why, you might have seen crape on her door knob, and noticed to-day I've been sad.
And they've got her a coffin of rosewood, and they say they have dressed her in white,
And I've never once looked through the fence, pa, since she died at eleven last night.

And ma says it's decent and proper. as I was her neighbor and friend,
That I should go there to the funeral, and she thinks you ought to attend;
But I am so clumsy and awkward, I know I shall be in the way,

And suppose they should speak to me, papa, I wouldn't
know just what to say.

So I think I will get up quite early; I know I sleep late,
but I know
I'll be sure to wake up if our Bridget pulls the string that
I'll tie to my toe,
And I'll crawl through the fence, and I'll gather the
Johnny-jump-ups" as they grew
Round her feet the first day that I saw her, and, papa, I'll
give them to you.

For you're a big man, and you know, pa, can come and go
just where you choose,
And you'll take the flowers into her, and surely they'll
never refuse;
But papa, don't *say* they're from Johnny. *They* won't
understand, don't you see,
But just lay them down on her bosom, and, papa, *she'll*
know they're from me.

BABIES AND KITTENS.

THERE were two kittens, a black and a gray,
And grandma said with a frown:
"It never will do to keep them both,
The black one we had better drown."

"Don't cry, my dear," to tiny Bess,
"One kitten is enough to keep,
Now run to nurse, for 'tis growing late"
And time you were fast asleep.

The morning dawned, and rosy and sweet,
Came little Bess from her nap,
The nurse said, "Go in mamma's room,
And look in grandma's lap.

"Come here," said grandma, with a smile,
From the rocking chair, where she sat,
"God has sent you two little sisters,
What do you think of that?"

Bess looked at the babies a moment
With their wee heads, yellow and brown,
And then to grandma soberly said,
"Which one are you going to drown?"

THE HINDOO'S PARADISE.

A Hindoo died; a happy thing to do,
When twenty years united to a shrew.
Released, he hopefully for entrance cries
Before the gates of Brahma's paradise.

"Hast thou been through purgatory?" Brahma asked,
"No, but I've been married," and he hung his head.
"Come in, come in, and welcome too, my son,
Marriage and purgatory are as one."

In bliss extreme he entered heaven's door,
And knew the peace he ne'er had known before.
But scarce had he entered the garden fair,
When another Hindoo asked admission there.

The self-same question, Brahma asked,
"Hast thou been through purgatory?"
"No, what then?" "Thou canst not enter,"
Did the god reply.
"Why, he that went in first was there no more than I."
"All that is true, but he has married been,
And so on earth, had suffered from all sin."
"Married; 'tis well; I've been married twice."
"Begone, we'll have no fools in paradise."

GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY.

SHE stood at the bar of justice,
A creature wan and wild,
In form too small for a woman,
In features too old for a child;
For a look so worn and pathetic
Was stamped on her pale young face,
It seemed long years of suffering
Must have left that silent trace.

"Your name," said the judge, as he eyed her
With a kindly look, yet keen;
"Is Mary McGuire, if you please, sir."
"And your age?" "I'm turned fifteen."
"Well, Mary,"—and then from a paper
He slowly and gravely read.
"You are charged here—I'm sorry to say it—
With stealing three loaves of bread.

"You look not like an offender,
And I hope that you can show

The charge to be false. Now, tell me
Are you guilty of this, or no?"
A passionate burst of weeping
Was at first her sole reply,
But she dried her eyes in a moment
And looked in the judge's eye.

"I will tell you just how it was, sir;
My father and mother are dead,
And my little brother and sisters
Were hungry, and asked me for bread.
At first I earned it for them
By working hard all day,
But somehow times were bad, sir,
And the work all fell away.

"I could get no more employment;
The weather was bitter cold;
The young ones cried and shivered—
Little Johnny's but four years old;
So, what was I to do, sir?
I am guilty, but do not condemn,
I took—oh, was it stealing?—
The bread to give to them."

Every man in the court room—
Graybeard and thoughtless youth—
Knew, as he looked upon her,
That the prisoner told the truth.
Out of their pockets brought 'kerchiefs,
Out from their eyes sprung tears,
And out from old, faded wallets
Treasures hoarded for years

The judge's face was a study,
The strangest you ever saw,
As he cleared his throat and murmured
Something about the law;
For one so learned in such matters
So wise in dealing with men,
He seemed on a simple question
Sorely puzzled just then.

But no one blamed him, or wondered,
When at last these words they heard
"The sentence of this young prisoner
Is, for the present, deferred."
And no one blamed him, or wondered
When he went to her and smiled,
And tenderly led from the court room
Himself, the "guilty" child.

"ROCK OF AGES."

"ROCK of Ages, cleft for me,"
Thoughtlessly the maiden sung.
Fell the words unconsciously,
From her girlish, gleeful tongue
Sang as little children sing;
Sang as sing the birds in June,
Fell the words like light leaves down
On the current of the tune—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

'Let me hide myself in Thee,"
Felt her soul no need to hide.
Sweet the song as song could be—
And she had no thought beside;
All the words unheedingly
Fell from lips untouched by care,
Dreaming not they each might be
On some other lips a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me"—
'Twas a woman sang them now.
Rose the song as storm-tossed bird
Beats with weary wing the air,
Every note with sorrow stirred—
Every syllable a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me"—
Lips grown aged sung the hymn
Trustingly and tenderly—
Voice grown weak and eyes grown dim.
"Let me hide myself in Thee."
Trembling though the voice and low,
Ran the sweet strain peacefully,
Like a river in its flow,
Sung as only they can sing
Who life's thorny paths have pressed;
Sung as only they can sing
Who behold the promised rest—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me."
Sang above a coffin lid;
Underneath, all restfully,
All life's joys and sorrows hid.
Nevermore, O storm-tossed soul!
Nevermore from wind or tide,
Nevermore from billows' roll,
Wilt thou need to hide.
Could the sightless, sunken eyes,
Closed beneath the soft gray hair,
Could the mute and stiffened lips
Move again in pleading prayer
Still, aye, still the words would be,
"Let me hide myself in Thee."

THE CLOWN'S BABY.

IT was out on the western frontier,
The miners, rugged and brown,
Were gathered around the posters;
The circus had come to town!
The great tent shone in the darkness,
Like a wonderful palace of light,
And rough men crowded the entrance:
Shows didn't come every night.

Not a woman's face among them,
Many a face that was bad,

And some that were very vacant,
And some that were very sad.
And behind a canvas curtain,
In a corner of the place,
The clown, with chalk and vermillion,
Was "making up" his face.

A weary-looking woman,
With a smile that still was sweet,
Sewed on a little garment,
With a cradle at her feet.
Pantaloon stood ready and waiting;
It was time for the going on,
But the clown in vain searched wildly,
The "property baby" was gone.

He murmured, impatiently hunting,
"It's strange that I cannot find;
There! I've looked in every corner;
It must have been left behind!"
The miners were stamping and shouting,
They were not patient men;
The clown bent over the cradle;
"I must take you, little Ben."

The mother started and shivered,
But trouble and want were near,
She lifted her baby gently;
"You'll be very careful, dear?"
"Careful? You foolish darling!"
How tenderly it was said!
What a smile shone through the chalk and paint!
"I love each hair of his head!"

The noise rose unto an uproar,
  Misrule for a time was king;
The clown with a foolish chuckle,
  Bolted into the ring.
But, as with a squeak and flourish,
  The fiddles closed their tune,
"You'll hold him as if he was made of glass?"
  Said the clown to the pantaloon.

The jovial fellow nodded,
  "I've a couple myself," he said,
"I know how to handle 'em, bless you!
  Old fellow, go ahead!"
The fun grew fast and furious,
  And not one of all the crowd
Had guessed that the baby was alive,
  When he suddenly laughed aloud.

Oh, that baby laugh! it was echoed
  From the benches with a ring,
And the roughest customer there sprang up
  With "Boys, it's the real thing!"
The ring was jammed in a minute,
  Not a man that did not strive
For "a shot at holding the baby,"
  The baby that was "alive!"

He was thronged by kneeling suitors
  In the midst of the dusty ring,
And he held his court right royally
  The fair little baby king,
Till one of the shouting courtiers
  A man with a bold, hard face,

The talk, for miles, of the country,
And terror of the place,

Raised the little king to his shoulder,
And chuckled, "Look at that!"
As the chubby fingers clutched his hair;
Then, "Boys, hand round the hat!"
There never was such a hatful
Of silver and gold and notes;
People are not always penniless
Because they don't wear coats!

And then, "Three cheers for the baby!'
I tell you those cheers were meant,
And the way in which they were given
Was enough to raise the tent.
And then there was sudden silence,
And a gruff old miner said,
"Come, boys, enough of this rumpus;
It is time it was put to bed."

So, looking a little sheepish,
But with faces strangely bright,
The audience somewhat lingering,
Flocked out into the night
And the bold-faced leader chuckled,
"He wasn't a bit afraid!
He's as game as he is good-looking;
Boys, that was a show that paid."

THE BEACON LIGHT.

"GO seaward, son, and bear a light!'
Up spoke the sailor's wife;

"Thy father sails this stormy night
In peril of his life!
"His ship that sailed to foreign lands
This hour may heave in sight.
O, should it wreck upon the sands!
Go, son, and bear a light!"

He lights a torch, and seaward goes;
Naught boots the deed, I doubt.
The rain it rains, the wind it blows;
And soon the light goes out.

The boy comes back: "O, mother dear,
Bid me not go again;
No torch can live, 'tis very clear,
Before the wind and rain!"

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I trow
To fear the stormy night
Let rains descend, let tempests roar,
Go, son, and bear a light!"

Once more he lights the torch, and goes
Toward the foaming main.
The rain it rains, the wind it blows;
Out goes the torch again!

The boy comes back: "O, mother dear,
The storm puts out the light
The night is drear, and much I fear
The woman dressed in white!"

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I trow,
To tremble thus before
A mermaid's face. Take heart of grace,
And seek again the shore!"

The boy comes back: "O, mother dear,
Go thou unto the strand;
My father's voice I sure did hear
In tones of stern command!"

And now, the mother lights the torch,
And, see! the kindling rays
Have caught the thatch! from roof to porch
The hut is all ablaze!

"What hast thou done? the urchin cries,
"O piteous sight to see!
Cold is the night. O wretched plight!
Nor house nor home have we!"

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I wis
When torches fail to burn
A blazing hovel—such as this—
May serve as good a turn!"

Joy to the sailor! see! he clears
The shoals on either hand,
Thanks to the light! and now he steers
In safety to the land!

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

O I have a man as good as can be,
No woman could wish for better than he.
Sometimes, indeed, he may chance to be wrong,
But his love for me is uncommonly strong.

He has one little fault that makes me fret,
He has ever less money, by far, than debt;

Moreover, he thrashes me now and then;
But excepting that, he's the best of men!

I own he is dreadfully given to drink,
Besides, he is rather too fond, I think,
Of playing cards and dice; but then,
Excepting that, he's the best of men!

He loves to chat with the girls, I know
('Tis the way with the men; they are always so)
But what care I for his flirting when,
Excepting that, he's the best of men!

When he's lots of rum, he is hardly polite,
But knocks the crockery left and right,
And pulls my hair, and growls again;
But excepting that, he's the best of men!

I can't but say I think he's rash
To pawn my pewter, and spend the cash,
But I haven't the heart to scold him, when,
Excepting that, he's the best of men!

What joy to think he is all my own!
The best of husbands that ever was known;
As good, indeed, as a man can be;
And who could wish for a better than he?

THE KING AND THE PEASANT.

THERE lived a man who from his youth,
Was known to all as "Peasant Truth,"
Because 'twas said he'd sooner die
Than tell or hint the smallest lie.

Now, when it happened that the king
Had heard, at last, this wondrous thing,
He bade the peasant come and keep
The royal flock of goats and sheep,
To wit—one goat, a little lamb,
A fine bell wether, and a ram.

And once a week he went to court
To see the king, and make report
How fared the flock, and truly tell
If each and all were ill or well.
Whereat the king was well content,
And home the happy peasant went.
At last a wicked courtier—struck
With envy at his neighbor's luck—
Essayed to put him in disgrace,
And gain himself the peasant's place.
"Think you, good sire, in very sooth,
He never lies—this Peasant Truth?
He'll lie next Saturday," he said
"Or, for a forfeit, take my head!"
"So be it! and I'll lose my own,"
The king replied, "if it be shown,
With all the arts that you may try,
That Peasant Truth can tell a lie!"
And now a wicked courtier fain
Some trick would try his end to gain.
But still he failed to find a plan
To catch at fault the honest man,
Until at last, in sheer despair,
He told his wife (a lady fair
As one in all the world could find,

And cunning, like all womankind)
About the wager he had made,
And all the case before her laid.
"And is that all?" the woman said,
Tossing in scorn her handsome head;
"Leave all to me, and never doubt
That what you wish I'll bring about!"

Next day the crafty dame was seen,
Appareled like a very queen,
And on her brow a diamond star,
That like a meteor blazed afar.
Approaching where the peasant stood
Among his flock, "Now, by the Rood!"
He cried, amazed, "but she is fair
And beautiful beyond compare."
Then bowing to the earth, quoth he,
"What may your highness want with me?
Whate'er you ask I swear to grant!"
"Ah!" sighed the lady, "much I want
Some roasted wether, else shall I
(Such is my longing!) surely die!"
"Alas!"he said, "just this one thing
I cannot do. I serve the king,
Who owns the wether that you see,
And if I kill him, woe is me!"
Alack the day for Peasant Truth!
His tender soul was moved to ruth;
For weeping much, and saying still
That she should die, she had her will,
And of roast wether took her fill!
"Ah!" sighed the man when she was gone,

"Alas! the deed that I have done!
To kill the sheep! What shall I say
When I am asked, next Saturday,
'How fares the wether?' I will tell
His majesty the sheep is well.
No, that won't do! I'll even say
A thief has stolen him away.
No, that won't answer. I will feign
Some prowling wolf the sheep has slain.
No, that won't do! Ah! how can I
Look into his face and tell a lie?"
Now when the peasant came to court
On Saturday, to make report,
As was his wont, the king began
His questioning; and thus it ran;
"How is my goat? I prithee tell!"
"The goat, your majesty, is well!"
"And how's my ram?" "Good sire,
The ram is well and frisky."
"How's my lamb?"
"He's well and beautiful, in sooth."
"And how's my wether, Peasant Truth?"
Whereat he answered, "Oh, my king,
I hate a lie like—anything.
When on the mountain side afar
I saw a lady with the star,
My soul was dazzled with her beauty
And I forgot my loyal duty,
And when she asked for wether's meat,
I killed the sheep, that she might eat."
"Good!" said the king, "my wager's won!
This grievous wrong that you have done,

My truthful peasant, I forgive;
In health and wealth long may you live!
While this your enemy, instead,
Shall justly lose his foolish head."

SILVER AND GOLD.

FAREWELL, my little sweetheart,
Now fare you well and free.
I claim from you no promise,
You claim no vows from me.
The reason why?—the reason
Right well we can uphold—
I have too much of silver,
And you too much of gold!

A puzzle, this, to worldlings,
Whose love to lucre flies,
Who think that gold to silver
Should count as mutual prize!
But I am not avaricious,
And you're not sordid-souled;
I have too much of silver,
And you've too much of gold.

Upon our heads the reason
Too plainly can be seen;
I am the winter's bond-slave,
You are the summer's queen;
Too few the years you number
Too many I have told;
I have too much of silver
And you've too much of gold.

You have the rose for token,
I have dry leaf and rime;
I have the sobbing vesper,
You, morning bells at chime.
I would that I were younger,
And you grew never old,
Would I had less of silver
But you no less of gold.

EVERY YEAR.

THE spring has less of brightness,
Every year;
And the snow a ghastlier whiteness,
Every year.
Nor do summer flowers quicken,
Nor the autumn fruitage thicken,
As they once did, for they sicken,
Every year.

It is growing darker, colder,
Every year;
As the heart and soul grow older,
Every year.
I care not for dancing,
Or for eyes with passion glancing,
Love is less and less entrancing
Every year.

Of the loves and sorrows blended,
Every year;
Of the charms of friendship ended,
Every year;

Of the ties that still might bind me,
Until time to death resign me
My infirmities remind me,
Every year.

Ah! how sad to look before us,
Every year;
While the clouds grow darker o'er us,
Every year;
When we see the blossoms faded,
That to bloom we might have aided,
And immortal garlands braided,
Every year.

To the past go more dead faces,
Every year;
As the loved leave vacant places,
Every year;
Everywhere the sad eyes meet us,
In the evening's dust they greet us,
And to come to them entreat us,
Every year.

"You are growing old," they tell us,
Every year;
You are more alone, they tell us,
Every year;
You can win no new affection;
You have only recollection,
Deeper sorrow and dejection,
Every year.

Yes, the shores of life are shifting,
Every year;

And we are seaward drifting,
Every year;
Old places, changing, fret us,
The living more forget us,
There are fewer to regret us,
Every year.

But the truer life draws nigher
Every year;
And the morning star climbs higher
Every year;
Earth's hold on us grows slighter,
And the heavy burden lighter,
And the dawn immortal brighter,
Every year.

THE PILOT'S STORY.

(*Abridged.*)

IT was the pilot's story: — "They both came abroad there at Cairo,
From a New Orleans boat, and took passage with us for St. Louis.
She was a beautiful woman, with just enough blood from her mother,
Darkening her eyes and her hair, to make her race known to a trader.
You would have thought she was white. The man that was with her— you see such—
Weakly good-natured and kind, and weakly good-natured and vicious,

Slender of body and soul, fit neither for loving nor hating.
I was a youngster then, and only learning the river,
Not over-fond of the wheel. I used to watch them at monte,
Down in the cabin at night, and learned to know all of the gamblers.
So when I saw this weak one staking his money against them,
Betting upon the turn of the cards, I knew what was coming;
They never left their pigeons a single feather to fly with.
Next day I saw them together, the stranger and one of the gamblers;
Picturesque rascal he was, with long black hair and mustaches,
Black slouch hat drawn down to his eyes from his villainous forehead.
On together they moved, still earnestly talking in whispers,
On toward the forecastle, where sat the woman alone by the gangway.
Roused by the fall of feet, she turned, and beholding her master,
Greeted him with a smile that was more like a wife's than another's;
Rose to meet him fondly, and then, with the dread apprehension
Always haunting the slave, fell her eye on the face of the gambler,
Dark and lustful and fierce and full of merciless cunning.
Something was spoken so low that I could not hear what the words were;

Only the woman started, and looked from one to the other,
With imploring eyes, bewildered hands and a tremor
All through her frame; I saw her from where I was standing, she shook so,
'Say, is it so?' she cried. On the weak white lips of her master
Died a sickly smile, and he said, 'Louise, I have sold you.'
God is my judge! May I never see such a look of despairing,
Desolate anguish, as that which the woman cast on her master,
Griping her breast with her little hands, as if he had stabbed her,
Standing in silence a space, as fixed as an Indian woman,
Carved out of wood, on the pilot-house of the old Pocahontas!
Then, with a gurgling moan, like the sound in the throat of the dying,
Came back her voice, that, rising, fluttered, through wild incoherence,
Into a terrible shriek that stopped my heart while she answered:
'Sold me? sold me? sold—And you promised to give me my freedom,
Promised me for the sake of our little boy in St. Louis?
What will you say to our God? Ah, you have been joking, I see it!
No? God! God! He shall hear it, and all of the angels in Heaven!

Even the devils in Hell! And none will believe when they hear it!
Sold me!"—Fell her voice in a thrilling wail, and in silence
Down she sank on the deck, and covered her face with her fingers."
In his story a moment the pilot paused, while we listened
To the salute of a boat, that, rounding the point of an island,
Flamed toward us with fires that seemed to burn from the waters,
Stately and vast and swift, and borne on the heart of the current.
Then, with the mighty voice of a giant challenged to battle,
Rose the responsive whistle, and all the echoes of island,
Swamp-land, glade and brake replied with a myriad clamor,
Like wild birds that are suddenly startled from slumber at midnight;
Then were at peace once more, and we heard the harsh cries of the peacocks
Perched on a tree by a cabin door, where the white-headed settler's
White-headed children stood to look at the boat as it passed them,
Passed them so near that we heard their happy talk and their laughter.
Softly the sunset had faded, and now on the eastern horizon
Hung, like a tear in the sky, the beautiful star of the evening.

Still with his back to us standing, the pilot went on with his story:—

'Instantly, all the people, with looks of reproach and compassion,
Flocked round the prostrate woman. The children cried, and their mothers
Hugged them tight to their breast; but the gambler said to the captain:
'Put me off there at the town that lies around the bend of the river.
Here, you, rise at once, and be ready now to go with me.'
Roughly he seized the woman's arms and strove to uplift her.
She—she seemed not to heed him, but rose like one that is dreaming,
Slid from his grasp, and fleetly mounted the steps of the gangway,
Up to the hurricane deck, in silence, without lamentation.
Straight to the stern of the boat, where the wheel was, she ran, and the people
Followed her fast till she turned and stood at bay for a moment,
Looking them in the face and in the face of the gambler.
Not one to save her,—not one of all the compassionate people!
Not one to save her, of all the pitying angels in heaven!
Not one bolt of God to strike him dead there before her!
Wildly she waved him back: we waited in silence and horror.
Over the swarthy face of the gambler a pallor of passion
Passed, like a gleam of lightning over the west in the night-time.

White, she stood, and mute, till he put forth his hand to secure her;
Then she turned and leaped,—in mid-air fluttered a moment,—
Down there, whirling, fell, like a broken-winged bird from a tree top,
Down on the cruel wheel, that caught her, and hurled her, and crushed her,
And in the foaming water plunged her, and hid her forever."

THE GRAY SWAN.

"OH, tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
A-sailing with your ship?"
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew—
"Your little lad, your Elihu?"
He said with trembling lip—
"What little lad? What ship?"

"What little lad! as if there could be
Another such a one as he!
What little lad, do you say?
Why, Elihu, that to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee!
It was just the other day
The Gray Swan sailed away."

"The other day!" the sailor's eyes
Stood open with a great surprise,—
"The other day! the Swan!"

His heart began in his throat to rise.
"Ay, ay, sir; here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on."
"And so your lad is gone?"

"Gone with the Swan," "And did she
Stand with her anchor clutching hold of the sand,
For a month, and never stir?"
"Why to be sure! I've seen from the land,
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand,
The wild sea kissing her,
A sight to remember, sir."

"But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?
I stood on the Gray Swan's deck,
And to that lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off, as it might be, so,
The kerchief from your neck."
"Ay, and he'll bring it back!"

"And did the little lawless lad
That has made you sick and made you sad,
Sail with the Gray Swan's crew?"
"Lawless! the man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had—
Be sure he sailed with the crew!
What would you have him do?"

"And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign
To say he was alive?"

"Hold! if 'twas wrong the wrong is mine
Besides, he may be in the brine,
And could he write from the grave?
Tut, man; what would you have?"
"Gone twenty years—a long, long cruise,
'Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;
But if the lad still live,
And come back home, think you, you can forgive?"
'Miserable man; you're as mad as the sea—you rave—
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew
The kerchief. She was wild.
"My God! my father! is it true!
My little lad, my Elihu!
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead—my living child!"

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER.

THE woman was old and ragged and gray,
And bent with the chill of the winter's day.

The street was wet with the recent snow,
And the woman's feet were aged and slow.

She stood at the crossing and waited long,
Alone, uncared-for, amid the throng.

Of human beings who passed her by,
Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout,
Glad in the freedom of school "let out,"

Came the boys like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray
Hastened the children on their way,

Nor offered a helping hand to her,
So meek, so timid, afraid to stir,

Lest the carriage wheels or the horses' feet
Should crowd her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop—
The gayest laddie of all the group;

He paused beside her and whispered low,
"I'll help you across if you wish to go."

Her aged hand on his strong young arm
She placed, and so without hurt or harm,

He guides her trembling feet along,
Proud that his own were firm and strong.

Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy and well content.

"She's somebody's mother, boys, you know,
For all she's aged and poor and slow;

"And I hope some fellow will lend a hand
To help my mother, you understand,

"If ever she's poor and old and gray,
When her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed low her head,
In her home that night, and the prayer she said
Was, "God be kind to the noble boy,
Who is somebody's son and pride and joy."

TOO MANY OF WE.

"MAMMA, is there too many of we?"
The little girl asked with a sigh.
"Perhaps you wouldn't be tired, you see,
If a few of your childs should die."

She was only three years old—the one
Who spoke in that strange, sad way,
As she saw her mother's impatient frown
At the children's boisterous play.

There were half a dozen who round her stood,
And the mother was sick and poor,
Worn out with the care of the noisy brood,
And the fight with the wolf at the door.

For a smile or a kiss, no time, no place;
For the little one, least of all;
And the shadow that darkened the mother's face
O'er the young life seemed to fall.

More thoughtful than any, she felt more care,
And pondered in childish way
How to lighten the burden she could not share,
Growing heavier every day.

Only a week, and the little Clare
In her tiny white trundle bed
Lay with blue eyes closed, and the sunny hair
Cut close from the golden head.

"Don't cry," she said—and the words were low,
Feeling tears that she could not see—
"You won't have to work and be so tired
When there ain't so many of we."

But the dear little daughter who went away
From the home that for once was stilled,
Showed the mother's heart from that dreary day
What a place she had always filled.

ONE OF THE LITTLE ONES.

'TWAS a crowded street, and a cry of joy
Came from a ragged, barefoot boy—
A cry of eager and glad surprise,
And he opened wide his great black eyes
As he held before him a coin of gold
He had found in a heap of rubbish old
By the curb stone there.

The passers-by
Paused at hearing that joyous cry,
As if 'twere a heavenly chime that rung,
Or a note from some angel song had been sung.
There, in the midst of the hurry and din
That raged the city's heart within,
And they wondered to hear that song of grace
Sung in such strange, unusual place.

As ofttimes into a dungeon deep
Some ray of sunlight perchance will creep,
So did that innocent childish cry
Break on the musings of passers-by,

Bidding them all at once forget
Stocks, quotations, and tare and tret,
And the thousand cares with which are rife
The daily rounds of a business life.

"How it sparkles!" the youngster cried,
As the golden piece he eagerly eyed;
"Oh, see it shine!" and he laughed aloud;
Little heeding the curious crowd
That gathered around, "Hurrah!" said he,
"How glad my poor old mother will be!
I'll buy her a brand-new Sunday hat,
And a pair of shoes for Nell, at that,
And baby sister shall have a dress—
There'll be enough for all, I guess;
And then I'll —— "

"Here," said a surly voice,
"That money's mine. You can take your choice
Of giving it up or going to jail."
The youngster trembled, and then turned pale
As he looked and saw before him stand
A burly drayman with outstretched hand;

Rough and uncouth was the fellow's face,
And without a single line or trace
Of the goodness that makes the world akin.
"Come, be quick! or I'll take you in,"
Said he.

"For shame!" said the listening crowd.
The ruffian seemed for a moment cowed.
"The money's mine," he blustered out;
"I lost it yesterday hereabout.

I don't want nothin' but what's my own,
And I am going to have it."
The lad alone
Was silent. A tear stood in his eye,
And he brushed it away; he would not cry.
"Here, mister," he answered, "take it, then;
If it's yours, it's yours; if it hadn't been ——"
A sob told all he would have said,
Of the hope so suddenly raised, now dead;

And then with a sigh, which volumes told,
He dropped the glittering piece of gold
Into the other's hand. Once more
He sighed—and his dream of wealth was o'er.
But no! Humanity hath a heart
Always ready to take the part
Of childish sorrow, whenever found.

"Let's make up á purse"—the word went round
Through the kindly crowd, and the hat was passed,
And the coins came falling thick and fast.

"Here, sonny, take this," said they. Behold,
Full twice as much as the piece of gold
He had given up was in the hand
Of the urchin. He could not understand
It all. The tears came thick and fast,
And his grateful heart found voice at last.

But, lo! when he spoke, the crowd had gone—
Left him, in gratitude, there alone.
Who'll say there is not some sweet good-will
And kindness left in this cold world still?

BRIER-ROSE.

[By Hjalmar Hjorth Boyeson; from *St. Nicholas.*]

I.

SAID Brier-Rose's mother to the naughty Brier-Rose:
"What *will* become of you, my child, the Lord Almighty knows.
You will not scrub the kettles, and you will not touch the broom;
You never sit a minute still at spinning wheel or loom."

Thus grumbled in the morning, and grumbled late at eve,
The good wife, as she bustled with pot and tray and sieve;
But Brier-Rose, she laughed and she cocked her dainty head:
"Why, I shall marry, mother dear," full merrily she said.

"*You* marry, saucy Brier-Rose! The man, he is not found
To marry such a worthless wench, these seventy leagues around."
But Brier-Rose, she laughed and she trilled a merry lay:
"Perhaps he'll come, my mother dear, from eighty leagues away."

The good wife, with a "humph" and a sigh, forsook the battle,
And flung her pots and pails about with much vindictive rattle:
"O Lord, what sin did I commit in youthful days and wild,
That thou hast punished me in age with such a wayward child?"

Up stole the girl on tiptoe, so that none her step could hear,

And laughing pressed an airy kiss behind the good wife's
ear.
And she, as e'er, relenting, sighed: "Oh, Heaven only
knows
Whatever will become of you, my naughty Brier-Rose!"

The sun was high, and summer sounds were teeming in
the air;
The clank of scythes, the cricket's whir, and swelling
wood-notes rare,
From field and copse and meadow; and through the open
door
Sweet, fragrant whiffs of new-mown hay the idle breezes
bore.

Then Brier-Rose grew pensive, like a bird of thoughtful
mien,
Whose little life has problems among the branches green.
She heard the river brawling where the tide was swift and
strong,
She heard the summer singing its strange, alluring song.

And out she skipped the meadows o'er and gazed into the
sky;
Her heart o'er-brimmed with gladness, she scarce herself
knew why;
And to a merry tune she hummed, "Oh, heaven only
knows
Whatever will become of the naughty Brier-Rose!"

Whene'er a thrifty matron this idle maid espied,
She shook her head in warning, and scarce her wrath
could hide;

For girls were made for housewives, for spinning wheel
and loom,
And not to drink the sunshine and wild flowers' sweet
perfume.

And oft the maidens cried, when the Brier-Rose went by,
"You cannot knit a stocking, and you cannot make a pie."
But Brier-Rose, as was her wont, she cocked her curly
head:
"But I can sing a pretty song," full merrily she said.

And oft the young lads shouted, when they saw the maid
at play:
"Ho, good-for-nothing Brier-Rose, how do you do to-day?"
Then she shook her tiny fist; to her cheeks the color flew:
"However much you coax me, I'll *never* dance with you."

II.

Thus flew the years light-winged over Brier-Rose's head,
Till she was twenty summers old, and yet remained unwed.
And all the parish wondered: "The Lord Almighty
knows
Whatever will become of that naughty Brier-Rose!"

And while they wondered came the spring a-dancing o'er
the hills;
Her breath was warmer than of yore, and all the mountain
rills,
With their tinkling and their rippling and their rushing
filled the air.
And the misty sounds of water forth-welling everywhere.

And in the valley's depth, like a lusty beast of prey,
The river leaped and roared aloud and tossed its mane of
spray;

Then hushed again its voice to a softly plashing croon,
As dark it rolled beneath the sun and white beneath the moon.

It was a merry sight to see the lumber as it whirled
Adown the tawny eddies that hissed and seethed and swirled,
Now shooting through the rapids, and, with a reeling swing,
Into the foam crests diving like an animated thing.

But in the narrows of the rocks, where o'er a steep incline
The waters plunged and wreathed in foam the dark boughs of the pine,
The lads kept watch with shout and song, and sent each straggling beam
A-spinning down the rapids, lest it should lock the stream.

III.

And yet—methinks I hear it now—wild voices in the night,
A rush of feet, a dog's harsh bark, to torch's flaring light,
And wandering gusts of dampness, and round us far and nigh,
A throbbing boom of water like a pulse beat in the sky.

The dawn just pierced the pallid east with spears of gold and red,
As we, with boat hooks in our hands, toward the narrows sped.
And terror smote us; for we heard the mighty tree-tops sway,
And thunder, as of chariots, and hissing showers of spray.

"Now, lads," the sheriff shouted, "you are strong like
Norway's rock;
A hundred crowns I give to him who breaks the lumber
lock!"
For if another hour go by, the angry waters' spoil
Our homes will be, and fields, and our weary years of toil."
We looked each at the other; each hoped his neighbor
would
Brave death and danger for his home, as valiant Norse-
men should.
But at our feet the brawling tide expanded like a lake,
And whirling beams came shooting on, and made the firm
rock quake.

"Two hundred crowns!" the sheriff cried, and breathless
stood the crowd.
"Two hundred crowns, my bonnie lads!" in anxious tones
and loud.
But not a man came forward, and no one spoke or stirred,
And nothing save the thunder of the cataract was heard.

But as with trembling hands and with fainting hearts we
stood,
We spied a little curly head emerging from the wood.
We heard a little snatch of a merry little song,
And saw the dainty Brier-Rose come dancing through the
throng.

An angry murmur rose from the people round about.
"Fling her into the river!" we heard the matrons shout;
"Chase her away, the silly thing; for God Himself scarce
knows,
Why ever He created that worthless Brier-Rose."

Sweet Brier-Rose, she heard their cries; a little pensive smile,
Across her fair face flitted, that might a stone beguile;
And then she gave her pretty head a roguish little cock:
"Hand me a boat hook, lads," she said, "I think I'll break the lock."

Derisive shouts of laughter broke from throats of young and old:
"Ho, good-for-nothing Brier-Rose, your tongue was ever bold."
And, mockingly, a boat hook into her hands was flung,
When, lo! into the river's midst with daring leaps she sprung!

We saw her dimly through the mist of dense and blinding spray;
From beam to beam she skipped, like a water-sprite at play;
And now and then faint gleams we caught of color through the mist:
A crimson waist, a golden head, a little dainty wrist.

In terror pressed the people to the margin of the hill;
A hundred breaths were bated, a hundred hearts stood still;
For, hark! from out the rapids came a strange and creaking sound,
And then a crash of thunder which shook the very ground.
The waters hurled the lumber mass down o'er the rocky steep;
We heard a muffled rumbling and a rolling in the deep;
We saw a tiny form which the torrent swiftly bore
And flung into the wild abyss, where it was seen no more.

Ah, little naughty Brier-Rose, thou could'st not weave nor spin;
Yet thou could'st do a nobler deed that all thy mocking kin;
For thou had'st courage e'en to die, and by thy death to save,
A thousand farms and lives from the fury of the wave.

And yet the adage lives, in the valley of thy birth;
When wayward children spend their days in heedless play and mirth,
Oft mothers say, half smiling, half sighing, "Heaven knows
Whatever will become of the naughty Brier-Rose."

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL.

HYMN AND RECITATION.

"JESUS, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll—
While the tempest still is nigh;"
Carelessly a little child,
In the sunshine, at her play,
Lisping sang, and sweetly smiled,
On a joyous April day;
Sang with laughter light and droll—
Sang with mirth in each blue eye;
"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

"Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;

Safe into the haven guide—
O, receive my soul at last;''
Mused a maiden in her bower,
With a soul that knew no care,
Waiting for the wedding hour,
And the bridegroom's coming there;
Mused with heart by grief untried,
Mused with no regretful past:
"Safe into the haven guide—
O, receive my soul at last.''

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone—
Still support and comfort me;''
Moaned a mother, as she bowed
O'er her baby, as it lay
Wrapped within its snowy shroud,
On a dreary autumn day;
Moaned of hopes forever flown—
Moaned of eyes that could not see:
"Leave, ah! leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me.''

"All my trust on Thee is stayed;
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.''
Faint and weary in the race,
In death's winter evening gray,
With a sweet, angelic face,
Dreamed a woman. Far away,

As the feeble twilight fled
Angels seemed with her to sing:
"Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing."

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly;
While the billows near me roll;
While the tempest still is nigh."
Ah! how soon our hopes decay;
We must suffer and endure;
Strive and struggle as we may,
Life is short and death is sure.
We may hear the anthem roll
Through the starry realms on high:
"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

PRAYING FOR SHOES.

ON a dark November morning,
A lady walked slowly down
The thronged, tumultuous thoroughfare
Of an ancient sea-port town.

Of a winning and gracious beauty,
The peace of her pure, young face
Was soft as the gleam of an angel's dream
In the calms of a heavenly place.

Her eyes were fountains of pity,
And the sensitive mouth expressed
A longing to set the kind thoughts free
In music that filled her breast.

She met, by a bright shop-window,
An urchin, timid and thin,
Who, with limbs that shook, and a yearning look,
Was mistily glancing in.

At the rows and various clusters
Of slippers and shoes outspread;
Some shimmering keen, but of somber sheen!
Some purple and green and red.

His pale lips moved and murmured;
But what, she could not hear,
And oft on his folded hands would fall
The round and bitter tear.

"What troubles you, my child?" she asked,
In a voice like the May wind sweet.
He turned, and while pointing dolefully
To his naked and bleeding feet,

"I was praying for shoes," he answered;
("Just look at the splendid show!")
I was praying God for a single pair,
The sharp stones hurt me so!"

She led him, in museful silence,
At once through the open door,
And his hope grew bright, like a fairy light,
That flickered and danced before!

And there he was washed and tended,
And his small brown feet were shod;
And he pondered there on his childish prayer,
And the marvelous answer of God.

Above them his keen gaze wandered,
How strangely from shop and shelf,
Till it almost seemed that he fondly dreamed
Of looking upon God himself.

The lady bent over and whispered:
"Are you happier now, my lad?"
He started, and his soul flashed forth
In gratitude swift and glad.

"Happy?—Oh yes! I am happy!"
Then (wonder with reverence rife,
His eyes aglow, and his voice sunk low),
"Please tell me! Are you God's wife?"

WHAT BESSIE SAW.

THIS morning, when all the rest had gone down
I stood by the window to see
The beautiful pictures, which there in the night
Jack Frost had been painting for me.

There were mountains, and windmills, and bridges, and boats,
Some queer-looking houses and trees;
A hammock that hung by itself in the air,
And a giant cut off at the knees.

Then there was a steeple, so crooked and high,
I was thinking it surely must fall,
When right down below it I happened to spy
The loveliest thing of them all.

The cutest and cunningest dear little girl!
I looked at her hard as I could,
And she stood there so dainty—and looked back at me—
In a little white ulster and hood.

"Good morning," I whispered, for all in a flash
I knew 'twas Jack Frost's little sister,
I was so glad to have her come visiting me,
I reached up quite softly and kissed her.

Then can you believe it? the darling was gone!
Kissed dead in that one little minute.
I never once dreamed that a kiss would do that.
How could there be any harm in it?

And I am so sorry! for though I have looked
Fifty times at that window since then,
Half hoping to see her once more, yet I know
She can never come back again.

And— it may be foolish—but all through the day
I have felt—and I knew that I should—
Just as if I had killed her, that dear little girl,
In the little white ulster and hood.

THE WOUNDED SOLDIER.

(*Abridged*).

STEADY, boys, steady! Keep your arms ready,
God only knows whom we may meet here.
Don't let me be taken; I'd rather awaken,
To-morrow, in—no matter where,
Than to lie in that foul prison-hole, over there.

Step slowly! Speak lowly! The rocks may have life;
Lay me down in the hollow; we are out of the strife.

By heaven! the foeman may track me in blood,
For this hole in my breast is outpouring a flood.
No! No surgeon for me; he can give me no aid;
The surgeon I want is a pick-axe and spade.
What, Morris, a tear? Why, shame on you, man!
I thought you a hero; but since you began
To whimper and cry, like a girl in her teens,
By George! I don't know what the devil it means.

Well! well! I am rough, 't is a very rough school,
This life of a trooper—but yet I'm no fool!
I know a brave man, and a friend from a foe;
And, boys, that you love me I certainly know.
But wasn't it grand,
When they came down the hill over sloughing and sand?
But we stood—did we not?—like immovable rock,
Unheeding their balls and repelling their shock.
Did you mind the loud cry, when, as turning to fly,
Our men sprang upon them, determined to die.
Oh, wasn't it grand?
God help the poor wretches who fell in the fight;
No time was there given for prayers or for flight.
They fell by the score, in the crash, hand to hand,
And they mingled their blood with the sloughing and sand.

Great heavens! This bullet-hole gapes like a grave;
A curse on the aim of the traitorous knave!
Is there never a one of you knows how to pray,
Or speak for a man as his life ebbs away?
Pray! Pray!

Our Father! Our Father!—why don't you proceed?
Can't you see I am dying? Great God, how I bleed!
Our Father in Heaven—boys, tell me the rest,
While I stanch the hot blood from the hole in my breast.
There's something about the forgiveness of sin;
Put that in! put that in!—and then
I'll follow your words and say an "Amen."

Here, Morris, old fellow, get hold of my hand,
And Wilson, my comrade—oh! wasn't it grand
When they came down the hill like a thunder-charged cloud,
And were scattered like mist by our brave little crowd?—
Where's Wilson, my comrade? Here, stoop down your head,
Can't you say a short prayer for the dying and dead?

"Christ-God, who died for sinners all,
Hear Thou this suppliant wanderer's cry;
Let not e'en this poor sparrow fall
Unheeded by Thy gracious eye;
Throw wide Thy gates to let him in,
And take him, pleading, to Thine arms;
Forgive, O Lord, his lifelong sin,
And quiet all his fierce alarms."

God bless you, my comrade, for singing that hymn,
It is light to my path, now my sight has grown dim.
I am dying! Bend down, till I touch you once more;
Don't forget me, old fellow,—God prosper this war!
Confusion to enemies!—keep hold of my hand—
And float our dear flag o'er a prosperous land!

I HAVE DRANK MY LAST GLASS.

NO, comrades, I thank you, not any for me;
My last chain is riven, henceforth I'm free;
I will go to my home and my children to-night
With no fumes of liquor their spirits to blight;
And with tears in my eyes I will beg my poor wife
To forgive me the wreck I have made of her life.
"I have never refused you before?" Let that pass,
For I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

Just look at me now, boys, in rags and disgrace,
With my bleared, haggard eyes, and my red, bloated face;
Mark my faltering step, and my weak, palsied hand.
And the mark on my brow that is worse than Cain's brand;
See my crownless old hat, and my elbows and knees,
Alike warmed by the sun, or chilled by the breeze.
Why, even the children will hoot as I pass;
But I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

You would scarce believe, boys, to look at me now
That a mother's soft hand was pressed on my brow
When she kissed me and blessed me, her darling, her pride,
Ere she laid down to rest by my dear father's side;
But with love in her eyes she looked up to the sky,
Bidding me meet her there, and whispered, "Good by."
And I'll do it, God helping! Your smile I let pass,
For I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

Ah! I reeled home last night; it was not very late,
For I'd spent my last sixpence, and landlords won't wait

On a fellow, who's left every cent in their till,
And has pawned his last bed, their coffers to fill.
Oh! the torments I felt, and the pangs I endured!
And I begged for one glass, just one would have cured,
But they kicked me out of doors. I let that too, pass
For I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

At home, my pet Susie, with her rich, golden hair,
I saw through the window, just kneeling in prayer;
From her pale, bony hands her torn sleeves were hung down,
While her feet, cold and bare, shrank beneath her scant gown;
And she prayed, prayed for bread, just a mere crust of bread,
For one crust, on her knees my poor darling plead,
And I heard with no penny to buy one, alas!
But I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

For Susie, my darling, my wee six-year-old,
Though fainting with hunger and shivering with cold,
There on the bare floor, asked God to bless me!
And she said, "Don't cry, mamma! He will; for you see,
I believe what I ask for!" Then sobered I crept
Away from the house; and that night when I slept
Next my heart lay the pledge. You smile! let it pass,
For I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

My darling child saved me! Her faith and her love
Are akin to my dear sainted mother's above!
I will make my words true or I'll die in the race,
And sobered I'll go to my last resting place;
And she shall kneel there, and, weeping, thank God

No drunkard lies under the daisy-strewn sod!
Not a drop more of poison my lips shall e'er pass,
For I've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass.

HOW HE SAVED ST. MICHAEL'S.

(*Abridged.*)

SO you beg for a story my darling, my brown-eyed Leopold,
And you, Alice, with face like morning, and curling locks of gold;
Then come, if you will and listen—stand close beside my knee—
To a tale of the southern city, proud Charleston by the sea.

It was long ago, my children, ere ever the signal gun
That blazed above Fort Sumter had awakened the North as one;
Long ere the wondrous pillar of battle cloud and fire
Had marked where the unchained millions marched on to their hearts' desire.

On the roofs and glittering turrets, that night, as the sun went down,
The mellow glow of the twilight shone like a jeweled crown;
And, bathed in the living glory, as the people lifted their eyes,
They saw the pride of the city, the spire of St. Michael's, rise.

The gently gathering shadows shut out the waning light;
The children prayed at their bedsides as you will pray to-night;
The noise of buyer and seller from the busy mart was gone;
And in dreams of a peaceful morrow the city slumbered on.

But another light than sunrise aroused the sleeping street;
For a cry was heard at midnight, and the rush of trampling feet;
And the fire king's wild battalions scaled wall and capstone high,
And planted their flaring banners against an inky sky.

From the death that raged behind them, and the crash of ruin loud,
To the great square of the city, were driven the surging crowd;
Where yet firm in all the tumult, unscathed by the fiery flood,
With its heavenward-pointing finger, the church of St. Michael stood.

But e'en as they gazed upon it there rose a sudden wail,—
A cry of horror blended with the roaring of the gale,
On whose scorching wings up-driven, a single flaming brand,
Aloft on the towering steeple clung like a bloody hand.

"Will it fade?" The whisper trembled from a thousand whitening lips;
Far out on the lurid harbor they watched it from the ships,—

A baleful gleam that brighter and ever brighter shone,
Like a flickering, trembling will-o'-wisp, to a steady beacon grown.

"Uncounted gold shall be given to the man whose brave right hand,
For the love of the periled city, plucks down yon burning brand!"
So cried the mayor of Charleston, that all the people heard;
But they looked each one at his fellow; and no man spoke a word.

Who is it leans from the belfry, with face upturned to the sky,
Clings to a column, and measures the dizzy spire with his eye?
Ah! see! he has stepped on the railing; he climbs with his feet and his hands;
And firm on a narrow projection, with the belfry beneath him, he stands.

Slow, steadily mounting, unheeding aught save the goal of the fire,
Still higher and higher, an atom, he moves on the face of the spire.
He stops! Will he fail? Lo! for answer, a gleam like a meteor's track,
And, hurled on the stones of the pavement, the red brand lies shattered and black.

Now, loud, the shouts of the people have rent the quivering air;

At the church-door mayor and council wait with their feet
on the stair;
And the eager throng behind them press for a touch of
his hand,—
The unknown saviour, whose daring could compass a deed
so grand.

But why does a sudden tremor seize on them while they
gaze?
And what meaneth that stifled murmur of wonder and
amaze?
He stood in the gate of the temple he had periled his life
to save;
And the face of the hero, my children, was the sable face
of a slave!

With folded arms he was speaking, in tones that were
clear, not loud,
And his eyes ablaze in their sockets, burnt into the eyes
of the crowd:—
"You may keep your gold: I scorn it! but answer me,
ye who can,
If the deed I have done before you be not the deed of—a
man?"

He stepped but a short space backward; and from all the
women and men,
There were only sobs for an answer; and the mayor called
for a pen,
And the great seal of the city, that he might read who
ran:
And the slave who saved St. Michael's went out from its
door—a man.

THE FACE AGAINST THE PANE.

(*Abridged.*)

MABEL, little Mabel, with face against the pane,
Looks out across the night, and sees the Beacon Light
A-trembling in the rain.
She hears the sea-birds screech, and the breakers on the beach
Making moan, making moan.
And the wind about the eaves of the cottage sobs and grieves;
And the willow-tree is blown to and fro, to and fro,
Till it seems like some old crone standing out there all alone,
With her woe,
Wringing, as she stands, her gaunt and palsied hands;
While Mabel, timid Mabel, with face against the pane,
Looks out across the night, and sees the Beacon Light
A-trembling in the rain.

Set the table, maiden Mabel, and make the cabin warm;
Your little fisher-lover is out there in the storm,
And your father—you are weeping!
O Mabel, timid Mabel, go, spread the supper-table,
And set the tea a-steeping.
Your lover's heart is brave, his boat is stanch and tight;
And your father knows the perilous reef that makes the water white.
But Mabel, Mabel darling, with face against the pane,
Looks out across the night at the Beacon in the rain.

The heavens are veined with fire! and the thunder how it rolls!
In the lullings of the storm the solemn church-bell tolls
For lost souls!
But no sexton sounds the knell in the belfry old and high;
Unseen fingers sway the bell as the wind goes tearing by!
How it tolls for the souls of the sailors on the sea!
God pity them, God pity them, wherever they may be!
God pity wives and sweethearts who wait and wait in vain!
And pity little Mabel with face against the pane.

A boom! the lighthouse gun!—how its echo rolls and rolls—
'Tis to warn the home-bound ships off the shoals.
See! a rocket cleaves the sky from the fort—a shaft of light!
See! it fades, and fading, leaves golden furrows on the night!

What makes Mabel's cheeks so pale? what makes Mabel's lips so white?
Did she see the helpless sail that went down and out of sight?
Down, down, and out of sight!
Oh, watch no more, no more, with face against the pane;
You cannot see the men that drown by the Beacon in the rain!

From a shoal of richest rubies breaks the morning clear and cold;
And the angel on the village spire, frost-touched, is bright as gold.

Four ancient fishermen, in the pleasant autumn air,
Come toiling up the sands, with something in their hands,—
Two bodies stark and white, ah, so ghastly in the light!
With sea-weed in their hair.
O ancient fishermen, go up to yonder cot!
You'll find a little child, with face against the pane,
Who looks toward the beach, and, looking, sees it not.
She will never watch again! never watch and weep at night!
For those pretty saintly eyes look beyond the stormy skies,
And they see the Beacon Light.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

WHIST, sir, would ye plaze to speak aisy,
And sit ye down there by the dure?
She sleeps, sir, so light and so restless,
She hears every step on the flure.
What ails her? God knows. She's been weakly
For months, and the heat dhrives her wild;
The summer has wasted and worn her,
Till she's only the ghost of a child.

All I have? Yes, she is, and God help me!
I'd three little darlints beside
As purty as iver ye see, sir,
But wan by wan dhrooped like, and died.

What was it that tuk them? ye're asking.
Why, poverty, sure, and no doubt;
They perished for food and fresh air, sir,
Like flowers dhried up in a drought.

'*Twas dreadful to lose them?* Ah, was it!
It seemed like my heart-strings would break,
But there's days when wid want and wid sorrow,
I'm thankful they're gone, for their sake.
Their father? Well, sir, saints forgive me!
It's a foul tongue that lowers its own:
But what wid the sthrikes and the liquor
I'd better be strugglin' alone.

Do I want to kape this wan? The darlint!
The last and dearest of all!
Sure, you're niver a father yourself, sir,
Or you wouldn't be askin' at all.
What is that? Milk and food for the baby!
A docthor and medicine free!
You're huntin' out all the sick children
An' poor, toilin' mothers, like me!

God bless you, and thim that have sent you!
A new life you've given me so,
Shure, sir, won't you look in the cradle
At the colleen you've saved, 'fore you go?
O mother o' mercies! have pity!
O darlint, why couldn't you wait?
Dead! dead! an' the help in the dure way!
Too late! oh, my baby! too late!

NOTHING.

"BLESSED be nothing!" an old woman said,
As she scrubbed away for her daily bread
"I'm better off than my neighbor, the squire
He's afraid of robbers, afraid of fire,
Afraid of flood to wreck his mill,
Afraid of something to cross his will.
I've nothing to burn, and nothing to steal
But a bit of pork and a barrel of meal.
A house that only keeps off the rain
Is easy burnt up and built again!
I sing at my washing, and sleep all night.
Blessed be nothing! My heart is light."

"Blessed be nothing!" the young man cried,
As he turned with a smile to his smiling bride.
"Banks are breaking, and stocks are down;
There's dread and bitterness all over town;
There are brokers groaning and bankers sad,
And men whose losses have made them mad;
There's silk and satin, but want of bread,
And many a woman would fain be dead,
Whose little children sob and cling
For the daily joy she cannot bring.
Blessed be nothing, for you and me!
We have no riches on wings to flee."

Blessed be nothing! if man might choose,
For he who hath it hath naught to lose;
Nothing to fear from flood or fire,
All things to hope for and desire;
The dream that is better than waking days;
The future that feeds the longing gaze.

Better, far better, than aught we hold,
As far as mining exceedeth gold,
Or hope fruition in earth below,
Or peace that is in us outward show.

Almost, when worn by weary years,
Tired with a pathway of thorns and tears,
When kindred fail us, and love has fled,
And we know the living less than the dead,
We think that the best of mortal good
Is a painless, friendless solitude.
For the pangs are more than the peace they give
Who make our lives so sad to live.
Blessed be nothing! it knows no loss,
Nor the sharpest nail of the Master's cross;
No friend to deny us, of none bereft,
And though we have no one, yet God is left.

Yet, having nothing, the whole is ours,
No thorns can pierce us who have no flowers;
And sure is the promise of His word,
Thy poor are blessed in spirit, Lord!
Whatever we lose of wealth or care,
Still there is left us the breath of prayer—
That heavenly breath of a world so high
Sorrow and sinning come not nigh;
The sure and certain mercy of Him
Who sitteth between the cherubim,
Yet cares for the lonely sparrow's fall,
And is ready and eager to help us all.
Rich is His bounty to all beneath;
To the poorest and saddest he giveth death.

TROUBLE IN THE "AMEN CORNER."

'TWAS a stylish congregation, that of Theophrastus Brown,
And its organ was the finest and the biggest in the town,
And the chorus,—all the papers favorably commented on it,
For 'twas said each female member had a forty-dollar bonnet.

Now in the "Amen Corner" of the church sat Brother Eyer,
Who persisted every Sabbath-day in singing with the choir;
He was poor, but genteel-looking, and his heart as snow was white,
And his old face beamed with sweetness when he sang with all his might.

His voice was cracked and broken, age had touched his vocal chords,
And nearly every Sunday he would mispronounce the words
Of the hymns, and 'twas no wonder, he was old and nearly blind,
And the choir rattling onward always left him far behind.

The chorus stormed and blustered, Brother Eyer sang too slow,
And then he used the tunes in vogue a hundred years ago;
At last the storm-cloud burst, and the church was told in fine,
That the brother must stop singing, or the choir would resign.

Then the pastor called together in the lecture room one day
Seven influential members who subscribe more than they pay,
And having asked God's guidance in a printed prayer or two
They put their heads together to determine what to do.

They debated, thought, suggested, till at last "dear Brother York,"
Who last winter made a million on a sudden rise in pork,
Rose and moved that a committee wait at once on Brother Eyer,
And proceed to rake him lively "for disturbin' of the choir."

Said he: "In that ere organ I've invested quite a pile,
And we'll sell it if we cannot worship in the latest style;
Our Philadelphy tenor tells me 'tis the hardest thing
Fer to make God understand him when the brother tries to sing.

"We've got the biggest organ, the best dressed choir in town,
We pay the steepest sal'ry to our pastor, Brother Brown;
But if we must humor ignorance because it's blind and old,—
If the choir's to be pestered, I will seek another fold."

Of course the motion carried, and one day a coach and four,
With the latest style of driver, rattled up to Eyer's door;
And the sleek, well-dressed committee, Brothers Sharkey, York and Lamb,
As they crossed the humble portal took good care to miss the jamb.

They found the choir's great trouble sitting in his old arm chair,
And the summer's golden sunbeams lay upon his thin white hair;
He was singing "Rock of Ages" in a voice both cracked and low,
But the angels understood him, 'twas all he cared to know.

Said York: "We're here, dear brother, with the vestry's approbation,
To discuss a little matter that affects the congregation";
"And the choir, too," said Sharkey, giving brother York a nudge,
"And the choir, too," he echoed with the graveness of a judge.

"It was the understanding when we bargained for the chorus
That it was to relieve us, that is, do the singing for us;
If we rupture the agreement, it is very plain, dear brother,
It will leave our congregation, and be gobbled by another.

"We don't want any singing except that what we've bought!
The latest tunes are all the rage; the old ones stand for naught;
And so we have decided—are you listening, Brother Eyer?—
That you'll have to stop your singin', for it flurrytates the choir."

The old man slowly raised his head, a sign that he did hear,
And on his cheek the trio caught the glitter of a tear;
His feeble hands pushed back the locks white as the silky snow,
As he answered the committee in a voice both sweet and low;

"I've sung the psalms of David for nearly eighty years;
They've been my staff and comfort and calmed life's many fears;
I'm sorry I disturb the choir, perhaps I'm doing wrong;
But when my heart is filled with praise, I can't keep back a song.

"I wonder if beyond the tide that's breaking at my feet,
In the far-off heavenly temple, where the Master I shall greet,—
Yes, I wonder when I try to sing the songs of God up higher
If the angel band will church me for disturbing Heaven's choir."

A silence filled the little room, the old man bowed his head;
The carriage rattled on again, but Brother Eyer was dead!
Yes, dead! his hand had raised the veil the future hangs before us,
And the Master dear had called him to the everlasting chorus.

The choir missed him for awhile, but he was soon forgot,
A few church goers watched the door: the old man entered not,
Far away, his voice no longer cracked, he sings his heart's desires,
Where there are no church committees and no fashionable choirs.

THEOLOGY IN THE QUARTERS.

NOW I's got a notion in my head dat when you come to die,
An' stan' de 'zamination in the Cote House in de sky,
You'll be 'stonished at de questions dat de angel's gwine to ax
When he gits you on de witness stan' an' pin you to de fac's;
'Cause he'll ax you mighty closely 'bout your doin's in de night,
An de watermilion question's gwine to bodder you a sight!
Den your eyes 'll open wider dan dey ebber done befo',
When he chats you 'bout a chicken scrape dat happened long ago!

De angels on de picket line erlong de Milky Way
Keeps a watchin' what you're dribin' at, an' hearin' what you say;
No matter what you want to do, no matter whar you's gwine,
Day's mighty ap' to find it out an' pass it 'long de line;
And of'en at de meetin', when you make a fuss an' laugh,
Why, dey send de news a-kitin' by de golden telegraph;
Den de angel in de orfis, what's a-settin' by de gate,
Jes' reads de message wid a look an' claps it on de slate!

Den you better do your duty well an' keep your conscience clear,
An' keep a-lookin' straight ahead, an' watchin' whar you steer.

'Cause arter while de time'll come to journey fum de lan',
An' dey'll take you way up in de a'r an' put you on de stan',
Den you'll hab to listen to de clerk an' answer mighty straight,
If you ebber spec' to trabble froo de alaplaster gate!

THE RIDE OF JENNIE McNEAL.

PAUL Revere was a rider bold—
Well has his valorous deed been told;
Sheridan's ride was a glorious one—
Often it has been dwelt upon;
But why should men do all the deeds
On which the love of a patriot feeds?
Hearken to me, while I reveal
The dashing ride of Jennie McNeal.

On a spot as pretty as might be found
In the dangerous length of the neutral ground,
In a cottage, cozy, and all their own,
She and her mother lived alone.
Safe were the two, with their frugal store,
From all of the many who passed their door;
For Jennie's mother was strange to fears,
And Jennie was large for fifteen years;
With vim her eyes were glistening,
Her hair was the hue of the blackbird's wing;
And while the friends who knew her well
The sweetness of her heart could tell,
A gun that hung on the kitchen wall
Looked solemnly quick to heed her call;

And they who were evil-minded knew
Her nerve was strong and her aim was true.
So all kind words and acts did deal
To generous, black-eyed Jennie McNeal.

One night, when the sun had crept to bed,
And rain clouds lingered overhead,
And sent their surly drops for proof
To drum a tune on the cottage roof,
Close after a knock at the outer door
There entered a dozen dragoons or more.
Their red coats, stained by the muddy road,
That they were British soldiers showed;
The captain his hostess bent to greet,
Saying, "Madam, please give us a bite to eat;
We will pay you well, and, if may be,
This bright-eyed girl for pouring our tea;
Then we must dash ten miles ahead,
To catch a rebel colonel abed.
He is visiting home, as doth appear;
We will make his pleasure cost him dear."
And they fell on the hasty supper with zeal,
Close watched the while by Jennie McNeal.

For the gray-haired colonel they hovered near,
Had been her true friend, kind and dear;
And oft in her younger days, had he
Right proudly perched her upon his knee,
And told her stories, many a one,
Concerning the French war lately done.
And oft together the two friends were,
And many the arts he had taught to her;

She had hunted by his fatherly side,
He had shown her how to fence and ride:
And once had said, "The time may be,
Your skill and courage may stand by me."
So sorrow for him she could but feel,
Brave, grateful-hearted Jennie McNeal.

With never a thought or a moment more,
Bare-headed she slipped from the cottage door,
Ran out where the horses were left to feed,
Unhitched and mounted the captain's steed,
And down the hilly and rock-strewn way
She urged the fiery horse of gray.
Around her slender and cloakless form
Pattered and moaned the ceaseless storm:
Secure and tight a gloveless hand
Grasped the reins with stern command;
And full and black her long hair streamed,
Whenever the ragged lightning gleamed.
And on she rushed for the colonel's weal,
Brave, lioness-hearted Jennie McNeal.

Hark! from the hills, a moment mute,
Came a clatter of hoofs in hot pursuit;
And a cry from the foremost trooper said,
"Halt! or your blood be on your head;
She heeded it not, and not in vain
She lashed the horse with the bridle rein.
So into the night the gray horse strode;
His shoes hewed fire from the rocky road;
And the high-born courage that never dies
Flashed from his rider's coal-black eyes.

The pebbles flew from the fearful race;
The rain drops grasped at her glowing face.
"On, on, brave beast!" with loud appeal,
Cried eager, resolute Jennie McNeal.

"Halt!" once more came the voice of dread;
"Halt! or your blood be on your head!"
Then no one answering to the calls.
Sped after her a volley of balls.
They passed her in rapid flight;
They screamed to her left, they screamed to her right;
But rushing still o'er the slippery track,
She sent no token of answer back,
Except a silvery laughter peal,
Brave, merry-hearted Jennie McNeal.

So on she rushed, at her own good will,
Through wood and valley, o'er plain and hill;
The gray horse did his duty well,
Till all at once he stumbled and fell,
Himself escaping the nets of harm,
But flinging the girl with a broken arm.
Still undismayed by the numbing pain,
She clung to the horse's bridle rein,
And gently bidding him to stand,
Petted him with her able hand;
Then sprung again to the saddle bow,
And shouted, "One more trial now!"
As if ashamed of the heedless fall,
He gathered his strength once more for all,
And, galloping down a hillside steep,
Gained on the troopers at every leap;

No more the high-bred steed did reel,
But ran his best for Jennie McNeal.

They were a furlong behind or more,
When the girl burst through the colonel's door,
Her poor arm helpless hanging with pain,
And she all drabbled and drenched with rain,
But her cheeks as red as firebrands are,
And her eyes as bright as a blazing star,
And shouted, "Quick, be quick, I say!
They come! they come! Away, away!"
Then sunk on the rude white floor of deal,
Poor, brave, exhausted Jennie McNeal.

The startled colonel sprung, and pressed
The wife and children to his breast,
And turned away from his fireside bright,
And glided into the stormy night;
Then soon and safely made his way
To where the patriot army lay,
But first he bent in the dim firelight,
And kissed the forehead broad and white,
And blessed the girl who had ridden so well
To keep him out of a prison cell.

The girl roused up at the martial din,
Just as the troopers came rushing in,
And laughed e'en in the midst of a moan,
Saying, "Good sirs, your bird has flown.
'Tis I who have scared him from his nest;
So deal with me now as you think best."
But the grand young captain bowed, and said,
"Never you hold a moment's dread.

Of womankind I must crown you queen;
So brave a girl I have never seen.
Wear this gold ring as your valor's due;
And when peace comes I will come for you."
But Jennie's face an arch smile wore,
As she said, "There's a lad in Putnam's corps,
Who told me the same, long time ago;
You two would never agree, I know.
I promised my love to be as true as steel,"
Said good, sure-hearted Jennie McNeal.

LOST AND FOUND.

SOME miners were sinking a shaft in Wales—
(I know not where,—but the facts have fill'd
A chink in my brain, while other tales

Have been swept away, as when pearls are spill'd,
One pearl rolls into a chink in the floor);
—Somewhere, then, where God's light is kill'd,

And men tear in the dark at the earth's heart-core.
These men were at work, when their axes knock'd
A hole in the passage closed years before.

A slip in the earth, I suppose, had block'd
This gallery suddenly up with a heap
Of rubble, as safe as a chest is lock'd,

Till these men pick'd it! and 'gan to creep
In, on all fours. Then a loud shout ran
Round the black roof—"Here's a man asleep!"

They all pushed forward, and scarce a span
From the mouth of the passage, in sooth, the lamp
Fell on the upturned face of a man.

No taint of death, no decaying damp
Had touch'd that fair young brow, whereon
Courage had set its glorious stamp.

Calm as a monarch upon his throne,
Lips hard clench'd, no shadow of fear,
He sat there taking his rest, alone.

He must have been there for many a year;
The spirit had fled, but there was its shrine,
In clothes of a century old or near!

The dry and embalming air of the mine
Had arrested the natural hand of decay,
Nor faded the flesh, nor dimm'd a line.

Who was he, then? No man could say
When the passage had suddenly fallen in—
Its memory, even, was passed away!

In their great rough arms, begrimed with coal,
They took him up, as a tender lass
Will carry a babe, from that darksome hole,

To the outer world of the short warm grass,
Then up spoke one, "Let us send for Bess,
She is seventy-nine, come Martinmass;

"Older than any one here; I guess!
Belike, she may mind when the wall fell there,
And remember the chap by his comeliness."

So they brought old Bess, with her silver hair,
To the side of the hill, where the dead man lay
Ere the flesh had crumbled in outer air.

And the crowd around them all gave way,
As with tottering steps old Bess drew nigh,
And bent o'er the face of the unchanged clay.

Then suddenly rang a sharp low cry!
Bess sank on her knees, and wildly toss'd
Her wither'd arms in the summer sky.

"O Willie! Willie! my lad! my lost!
The Lord be praised! after sixty years
I see you again! The tears you cost,

"O Willie, darlin', were bitter tears!
They never looked for ye underground,
They told me a tale to mock my fears!

"They said ye were auver the sea—ye'd found
A lass ye loved better nor me, to explain
How ye'd a-vanish'd fra sight and sound!

"O darlin', a long, long life o' pain
I ha' lived since then! And now I'm old,
Seems a'most as if youth were come back again.

"Seeing ye there wi' your locks o' gold,
And limbs as straight as ashen beams,
I a'most forget how the years ha' rolled

"Between us! O Willie! how strange it seems
To see ye here as I've seen you oft,
Auver and auver again in dreams!"

In broken words like these, with soft
Low wail she rock'd herself. And none
Of the rough men around her scoff'd.

For surely a sight like this, the sun
Had rarely looked upon. Face to face,
The old dead love and the living one!

The dead, with its undimm'd fleshly grace
At the end of the three score years; the quick,
Pucker'd, and wither'd, without a trace

Of its warm girl beauty! A wizard's trick
Bringing the youth and the love that were,
Back to the eyes of the old and sick!

Those bodies were just of one age; yet there
Death, clad in youth, had been standing still,
While life had been fretting itself threadbare!

But the moment was come (as a moment will
To all who have loved, and have parted here,
And have toil'd alone up the thorny hill;

When, at the top, as their eyes see clear,
Over the mists in the vale below,
Mere specks their trials and toils appear,

Beside the eternal rest they know)—
Death came to old Bess that night, and gave
The welcome summons that she should go.

And now, though the rains and winds may rave,
Nothing can part them. Deep and wide,
The miners that evening dug one grave!

And there, while the summers and winters glide
Old Bess and young Willie sleep side by side!

LITTLE JOE'S FLOWERS.

PROP your eyes wide open, Joey,
For I've brought you sumpin great.
Apples? No, but something better!
Don't you take no interest? Wait!
Flowers, Joe—I knew you'd like 'em—
Ain't them scrumptious? Ain't them high?
Tears, my boy? Wot's them fur, Joey?
There—Poor little Joe!—don't cry!

I was skippin' past a winder,
Where a bang-up lady sot,
All amongst a lot of bushes—
Each one climbin' from a pot;
Every bush had flowers on it—
Pretty? Mebby not! Oh no!
Wish you could a-seen 'em growin'
It was such a stunnin' show.

Well, I thought of you, poor feller,
Lyin' here so sick and weak,
Never knowin' any comfort,
And I puts on lots o' cheek.
"Missus," says I, "if you please, mum,
Could I ax you for a rose?
For my little brother, missus—
Never seed one, I suppose."

Then I told her all about you—
How I bringed you up, poor Joe!
(Lackin' women folks to do it.)
Such a' imp you was, you know—

Till yer got that awful tumble,
Just as I had broke yer in
(Hard work, too) to earn yer livin'
Blackin' boots for honest tin.

How that tumble crippled of you,
So's you couldn't hyper much—
Joe, it hurted when I seen you
Fur the first time with yer crutch,
"But," I says, "he's laid up now, mum,
'Pears to weaken every day";
Joe, she up and went to cuttin'—
That's the how of this bokay.

Say! it seems to me, ole feller,
You is quite yourself to-night!
Kind o' chirk—it's been a fortnit
Since yer eyes 's been so bright
Better! well, I'm glad to hear it!
Yes, they're mighty pretty, Joe,
Smellin' of 'em's made you happy?
Well, I thought it, would, you know

Never seed the country, did you?
Flowers growin' everywhere!
Sometime when you're better, Joey.
Mebbe I kin take you there.
Flowers in Heaven? M—I spose so;
Dunno much about it, though!
Ain't as fly as wot I might be
On them topics, little Joe.

But I've heard it hinted, somewhere,
That in Heaven's golden gates
Things is everlastin' cheerful—
B'lieve that's what the Bible states.
Likewise, there folks don't get hungry;
So good people when they dies,
Finds themselves well fixed forever—
Joe, my boy, wot ails your eyes?

Thought they looked a little sing'ler,
Oh, no! Don't you have no fear;
Heaven was made for such as you is—
Joe, wot makes you look so queer?
Here, wake up! Oh, don't look that way!
Joe! my boy! Hold up your head!
Here's your flowers. You dropped 'em, Joey,
—Oh, my God! Can Joe be dead?

LEADVILLE JIM.

HE came to town one winter day;
He had walked from Leadville all the way:
He went to work in a lumber yard,
And wrote a letter that ran: "Dear Pard,
Stick to the claim, whatever you do,
And remember that Jim will see you through."
For, to quote his partner, "they owned a lead
Mit der shplendidest brospects, und nodings to ead."

When Sunday came he brushed his coat,
And tied a handkerchief round his throat,
Though his feet in hob-nailed shoes were shod
He ventured to enter the house of God.

When, sharply scanning his ill-clad feet,
The usher gave him the rearmost seat.
By chance the loveliest girl in town
Came late to the house of God that day,
And, scorning to make a vain display
Of her brand new, beautiful Sunday gown,
Beside the threadbare man sat down.
When the organ pealed she turned to Jim,
And kindly offered her book to him,
Held half herself, and showed him the place,
And then with genuine Christian grace,
She sang soprano, and he sang bass,
While up in the choir the basso growled,
The tenor, soprano and alto howled,
And the banker's son looked back and scowled.

The preacher closed his sermon grand
With an invitation to "join the band."
Then quietly from his seat uprose
The miner, dressed in his threadbare clothes,
And over the carpeted floor walked down,
The aisle of the richest church in town.
In spite of the general shudder and frown,
He joined the church and went his way;
But he did not know he had walked that day
O'er the sensitive corns of pride, rough-shod;
For the miner was thinking just then of God.
A little lonely it seemed to him
In the rearmost pew when Sunday came;
One deacon had dubbed him "Leadville Jim,"
But the rest had forgotten quite his name.

And yet 'twas never more strange than true,
God sat with the man in the rearmost pew,
Strengthened his arm in the lumber yard,
And away in the mountains helped his "Pard."

But after a while a letter came
Which ran: "Dear Yim—I haf sell our claim,
Und I send you a jeck for half der same.
A million, I dought, was a pooty good brice,
Und my *heart* said to sell, so I took its advice—
You know what I mean if you lofe a fraulein—
Good-by. I am going to marry Katrine."

The hob-nailed shoes and rusty coat
Were laid aside, and another note
Came rippling out of the public throat,
The miner was now no longer "Jim,"
But the deacons "Brothered" and "Mistered" him:
Took their buggies and showed him round.
And, more than the fact of his wealth, they found
Through the papers which told the wondrous tale,
That the fellow had led his class at Yale.
Ah! the maidens admired his splendid shape,
Which the tailor had matched with careful tape;
But he married the loveliest girl in town,
The one who once by his side sat down,
When up in the choir the basso growled,
Then tenor, soprano and alto howled,
And the banker's son looked back and scowled.

BETTER IN THE MORNING.

"YOU can't help the baby, parson,
But still I want ye to go
Down an' look in upon her,
An' read an' pray, you know.
Only last week she was skippin' 'round
A-pullin' my whiskers 'n' hair,
A-climbin' up to the table
Into her little high chair.

"The first night that she took it,
When her little cheeks grew red,
When she kissed good-night to papa,
And went away to bed.
Sez she, 'Tis headache, papa,
Be better in mornin'—bye.'
An' somethin' in how she said it
Jest made me want to cry.

"But the mornin' brought the fever,
And her little hands were hot,
An' the pretty red uv her little cheeks
Grew into a crimson spot.
But she laid there just as patient
Ez ever a woman could,
Takin' whatever we give her
Better than a woman would.

"The days are terrible long an slow.
An' she's growin' wus in each;
An' now she's just a slippin'
Clear away out of our reach.

Every night when I kiss her,
Tryin' hard not to cry,
She says in a way that kills me—
'Be better in mornin'—bye!'

"She can't get thro' the night, parson,
So I want ye to come an' pray,
And talk with mother a little—
You'll know jest what to say.
Not that the baby needs it,
Nor that we make any complaint
That God seems to think He's needin'
The smile uv the little saint."

I walked along with the corporal
To the door of his humble home
To which the silent messenger
Before me had also come;
And if he had been a titled prince,
I would not have been honored more
Than I was with this heartfelt welcome
To his lowly cottage door.

Night falls again in the cottage;
They move in silence and dread,
Around the room where the baby
Lies panting upon her bed,
"Does baby know papa, darling?'
And she moves her little face
With answer that shows she knows him;
But scarce a visible trace
Of her wonderful infantile beauty
Remains as it was before

The unseen, silent messenger
Had waited at their door.
"Papa—kiss—baby—I's—*so*—tired—"
The man bows his face,
And two swollen hands are lifted
In baby's last embrace.

And into her father's grizzled beard
The little red fingers cling,
While her husky, whispered tenderness
Tears from a rock would wring.
"Baby—is—*so*—*sick*—papa—
But—don't—want—you—to cry."
The little hands fall on the coverlet—
'Be—*better*—in—mornin'—bye."

The night around baby is falling,
Settling down dark and dense;
Does God need their darling in Heaven,
That He must carry her hence?
I prayed with tears in my voice,
As the corporal solemnly knelt,
With grief such as never before
His great warm heart had felt.

Oh! frivolous men and women!
Do you know that around you, and nigh,
Alike from the humble and haughty,
Goeth up evermore the cry:
"My child, my precious, my darling,
How *can* I let you die?"
Oh! hear ye the white lips whisper—
"Be—better—in—mornin'—bye."

THE CHRISTMAS BABY.

HOOT! ye little rascal! ye come it on me this way,
Croudin' yerself amongst us this blusterin' winter's day,
Knowin' that we already have three of ye, an' seven,
An' tryin' to make yerself out a Christmas present o' Heaven?

Ten of ye have we now, sir, for this world to abuse;
An' Bobbie he have no waistcoat, an' Nellie she have no shoes,
An' Sammie he have no shirt, sir (I tell it to his shame),
An' the one that was just before ye we ain't had time to name!

An' all o' the banks be smashin', an' on us poor folk fall;
An' Boss he whittles the wages when work's to be had at all;
An' Tom he have cut his foot off, an' lies in a woful plight,
An' all of us wonders at mornin' as what we shall eat at night;

An' but for your father an' Sandy a-findin'somewhat to do,
An' but for the preacher's woman, who often helps us through,
An' but for your poor dear mother a doin' twice her part,
Ye'd 'a seen us all in heaven afore *ye* was ready to start!

An' now *ye* have come, ye rascal! so healthy an fat an' sound,
A-weighin', I'll wager a dollar, the full of a dozen pound!
With yer mother's eyes a flashin', yer father's flesh an' build,
An' a good big mouth an' stomach all ready for to be filled!

No, no! don't cry, my baby! hush up, my pretty one!
Don't get my chaff in yer eye, boy—I only was just in fun.
Ye'll like us when ye know us, although we're cur'us folks;
But we don't get much victual, an' half our livin' is jokes!

Why, boy, did ye take me in earnest? come sit upon my knee;
I'll tell ye a secret, youngster, I'll name ye after me;
Ye shall have all yer brothers an' sisters with ye to play,
An' ye shall have yer carriage, an' ride out every day!

Why, boy, do ye think ye'll suffer? I'm gettin' a trifle old,
But it'll be many years yet before I lose my hold;
An' if I should fall on the road, boy, still, them's yer brothers, there,
An' not a rogue of 'em ever would see ye harmed a hair!

Say! when ye come from heaven, my little namesake dear,
Did ye see, 'mongst the little girls there, a face like this one here?
That was yer little sister—she died a year ago,
An' all of us cried like babies when they laid her under the snow!

Hang it! if all the rich men I ever see or knew
Come here with all their traps, boy, an' offered 'em for you,
I'd show 'em to the door, sir, so quick they'd think it odd,
Before I'd sell to another my Christmas gift from God!

FARMER BEN'S THEORY.

"I TELL ye it's nonsense" said Farmer Ben,
"This farmin' by books and rules,
And sendin' the boys to learn that stuff
At the agricultural schools.
Rotation o' crops and analysis!
Talk that to a young baboon!
But ye needn't be tellin' yer science to me,
For I believe in the moon.

"If ye plant yer corn on the growin' moon,
And put up the lines for crows,
You'll find it will bear, and yer wheat will, too,
If it's decent land where 't grows.
But potatoes now are a different thing,
They want to grow down, that is plain;
And don't you see you must plant for that
When the moon is on the wane?

"So in plantin' and hoein' and hayin' time
It is well to have an eye
On the hang o' the moon—ye know ye can tell
A wet moon from a dry.
And as to hayin', you wise ones now
Are cuttin' yer grass too soon;
If ye want it to spend, just wait till it's ripe,
And mow on the full of the moon.

"And when all the harvest work is done,
And the butcherin' times comes round,
Though yer hogs may be lookin' the very best,
And as fat as hogs are found,

You will find yer pork all shriveled and shrunk
When it comes to the table at noon—
All fried to rags—if it wasn't killed
At the right time of the moon.

"With the farmers' meetin's and granges now,
Folks can talk till all is blue;
But don't ye be swallerin' all ye hear,
For there ain't more'n half on't true.
They are trying to make me change my ways,
But I tell 'em I'm no such coon;
I shall keep right on in the safe old plan
And work my farm by the moon."

A STRAY SUNBEAM.

MY story is a simple one, its moral I don't know.
'Tis not a tale of incidents that happened long ago,
But a simple little story, put into simple rhyme,
That is a temperance lesson just suited to this time.
My hero was a wayward boy, big-hearted, full of fun,
Of brightest brain and intellect, a widow's only son;
For his father was a soldier, who fell in our late strife,
And left the widow with this babe to fight her way through life.
Oh, how she fairly worshiped him and lived for him alone,
And waited fondly for the day her darling would be grown,
And be her strong protector through her declining years;
Yes, she worshiped him and watched him, filled alike with hopes and fears;
For no father lived to govern the strong and wayward child,

And as he grew up older, he also grew more wild,
Till with drinking, gambling, everything that makes a downward start
He made her life a torture and broke her loving heart.

One night, with boon companions, his brain was all afire,
When a message from a minister came speeding o'er the wire.

He took it without thinking—he read it and was dumb;
'Twas short, but oh, how awful: "Your mother's dying. Come!"

How quickly sped he homeward, how crazed at every wait,
Till he reached that mother's bedside. Alas! he came too late.

For the gentle voice was stilled, and, folded on her breast
Were the patient, loving hands that oft had laid her boy to rest,
And the lips that kissed the clustering curls from off his boyhood's brow
Were pale, and cold, and lifeless; no words of love came now,
And the heart that he had tortured, which every throb made sore
Was touched by death's cold, icy hand, to beat for him no more.

He sank beside that bedside and smote his half-crazed brain
And cried: "Come back, my mother!" Too late—he cried in vain;
And his kisses brought no love light from the eyes that death had sealed.
Then with choking sobs of anguish down by her side he kneeled,

And from his heart that just before had known no thought
of care,
There went up to his Maker this simple earnest prayer:
"O God, look down in pity upon a humbled one;
Forgive, O God, forgive me, for what my deeds have done;
And give, oh give, to aid me, thine arm, O Mighty
One,
And let my mother's spirit watch o'er her wayward son."
And did He hear that prayer? Ah, yes. A newer life
began.
The headstrong, reckless youth was changed into a noble
man,
Whose deeds were all of kindness, of honor, and of love,
Protected by that spirit that hovered up above,
The spirit of his mother, whom death had claimed before,
And who waited, patient waited, for him at heaven's
door.
And liquor did not touch the lips that fervent did appeal,
When by that mother's corpse her son a suppliant did kneel.
A year was gone, he stood beside the grave of that loved
one,
And twilight came and darkling clouds shut out the setting
sun;
And he murmured "Mother, darling, I'm standing by thy
grave;
Thy spirit, ever near me, has made me strong and brave.
Be near me, angel mother, protect me by thy love,
And guide me ever onward, until we meet above."
He stopped, and lo, from through the gloom that marked
the closing day
There came a little sunbeam, a little silvery ray,

And it lingered there a moment with a soft caressing air
Upon the broad white forehead, 'neath the clustering curls
of hair.
Oh, do the souls of loved ones watch? They do. Deny
not this;
That little straying sunbeam was his angel mother's kiss.

WHAT BECAME OF A LIE.

FIRST, somebody told it,
Then the room wouldn't hold it,
So the busy tongues rolled it
Till they got it outside,
When the crowd came across it,
And never once lost it,
But tossed it and tossed it
Till it grew long and wide.

From a very small lie, sir,
It grew deep and high, sir,
Till it reached to the sky, sir,
And frightened the moon;
For she hid her sweet face, sir,
In a veil of cloud-lace, sir,
At the dreadful disgrace, sir,
That happened at noon.

This lie brought forth others,
Dark sisters and brothers,
And fathers and mothers—
A terrible crew;

And while headlong they hurried,
The people they flurried,
And troubled and worried
As lies always do.

And so, evil-bodied,
This monstrous lie goaded,
Till at last it exploded
In smoke and in shame;
When from mud and from mire
The pieces flew higher,
And hit the sad liar,
And killed his good name!

THE BRIDGE KEEPER'S STORY.

DO we have many accidents here, sir?
Well, no! but of one I could tell,
If you wouldn't mind hearing the story;
I have cause to remember it well!

You see how the drawbridge swings open
When the vessels come in from the bay,
When the lightning express comes along, sir,
That bridge must be shut right away!

You see how it's worked by the windlass,
A child, sir, could manage it well;
My brave little chap used to do it,
But that's part of the tale I must tell.

It is two years ago come the autumn,
I shall never forget it, I'm sure;
I was sitting at work in the house here,
And the boy played just outside the door.

You must know, that the wages I'm getting
For the work on the line are not great,
So I picked up a little shoemaking,
And I manage to live at that rate.

I was pounding away on my lapstone,
And singing as blithe as could be!
Keeping time with the tap of my hammer
On the work that I held at my knee.

And Willie, my golden-haired darling,
Was tying a tail on his kite;
His cheeks all aglow with excitement,
And his blue eyes lit up with delight.

When the telegraph bell at the station
Rang out the express on its way;
"All right father"! shouted my Willie,
"Remember, I'm pointsman to-day!"

I heard the wheel turn at the windlass,
I heard the bridge swing on its way,
And then came a cry from my darling
That filled my poor heart with dismay.

"Help, father! oh, help me!" he shouted.
I sprang through the door with a scream;
His clothes had got caught in the windlass.
There he hung o'er the swift, rushing stream.

And there, like a speck in the distance,
I saw the fleet, on coming train;
And the bridge that I thought safely fastened,
Unclosed and swung backward again,

I rushed to my boy; ere I reached him,
He fell in the river below.
I saw his bright curls on the water,
Borne away by the current's swift flow.

I sprang to the edge of the river,
But there was the on rushing train;
And hundreds of lives were in peril,
Till that bridge was refastened again.

I heard a loud shriek just behind me,
I turned, and his mother stood there,
Looking just like a statue of marble,
With her hands clasped in agonized prayer.

Should I leap in the swift-flowing torrent
While the train went headlong to its fate,
Or stop to refasten the drawbridge,
And go to his rescue too late?

I looked at my wife, and she whispered,
With choking sobs stopping her breath,
"Do your duty, and Heaven will help you
To save our own darling from death!"

Quick as thought, then, I flew to the windlass,
And fastened the bridge with a crash,
Then, just as the train rushed across it,
I leaped in the stream with a splash.

How I fought with the swift-rushing water!
How I battled till hope almost fled,
But just as I thought I had lost him,
Up floated his bright, golden head,

How I eagerly seized on his girdle,
As a miser would clutch at his gold,
But the snap of his belt came unfastened,
And the swift stream unloosened my hold.

He sank once again, but I followed,
And caught at his bright, clustering hair,
And biting my lip till the blood came,
I swam with the strength of despair!

We had got to the bend of the river,
Where the water leaps down with a dash;
I held my boy tighter than ever,
And steeled all my nerves for the crash.

The foaming and thundering whirlpool
Engulfed us; I struggled for breath,
Then caught on a crag in the current,
Just saved, for a moment, from death!

And there, on the bank, stood his mother,
And some sailors were flinging a rope;
It reached us at last, and I caught it,
For I knew 't was our very last hope!

And right up the steep rock they dragged us;
I cannot forget, to this day,
How I clung to the rope, while my darling
In my arms like a dead baby lay.

And down on the greensward I laid him
Till the color came back to his face;
And, oh! how my heart beat with rapture
As I felt his warm, loving embrace.

There, sir! that's my story, a true one,
Though it's far more exciting than some,
It has taught me a lesson, and that is,
"Do your duty, whatever may come!"

CONVICT JOE.

DID I know Convict Joe? Yes, I knew him,
And I ne'er knew an honester lad,
Till he took head and heart to the bottle,
And went with a rush to the bad.
Ah, Joe's was a pitiful case, sirs,
And shows, you'll allow it, I think,
That granting *his* part in the business,
Joe was less in the blame than the drink.

Was he married? He was; and the thought o't
Brings tears of distress to the eyes;
'Twas awful—the murderous sequel!
And to Joe a blood-curdling surprise;
For he didn't know what he was doing,
Held in thrall by a fierce, mocking curse;
One drink-maddened blow!—and the end o't—
Felon chains and eternal remorse!

But the story? Well, Joe was a shipwright,
And a powerful chap, you may depend;
Could throw any man in a wrestle,
But the drink worsted him in the end.
Taking "bouts" at the dram, he grew fond o't,
And his wife—just the best you could find—
Wept tears when the drink fit was on him,
As like to go out of her mind.

For Joe, once her love and her idol,
On whom she still doted with pride,
Was bringing disgrace on that dear wife,
And the sweet child that clung to her side.
The household that was once his pleasure
No longer commanded his heart;
Strong drink was the one god he worshiped,
Whose signboard is ruin's black chart.

Well, one night, as I said, he came home, sirs,
Just as bad with the drink as could be;
He'd been "off work" and "clubbing" with others.
Having out what is called a "rare spree."
It was late, and his poor wife sat lonely,
Awaiting his wished-for return;
But he scolded her out of his presence,
And bunked on the floor till the morn.

Till the morn did he sleep? No; the madness
That lurks the hot brandy within
Wrought hell in his brain, and thence doomed him,
Ere dawn, to a terrible sin!
He was mad! he was frenzied with horror!
Fiends stung him with venomous hiss!
He grappled with phantoms that dragged him
Toward suicide's gaping abyss!

They were clasping and clinging unto him,
They were tearing the flesh from his heart,
They were on him! around him! within him!
And would not for God's sake depart!
In his hot hands he buried his eyesight,
And held, horror-stricken, his breath,

But still the brain phantoms were around him.
Were dragging him downward to death!

"Wife, wife!" in his horror, he shouted
And toward his presence she flew;
'Joe, dearest! my husband!" "No, woman!
Back, horrible monster! *not you!*"
His brain hot with fury, he clutched at
A hatchet!—one terrible blow!
Next moment, death's presence stood by him
With a forefinger pointing at—*woe!*

He had killed her! but didn't know of it,
Had thought her no wife, but a fiend
Come to torture his soul in *her* semblance,
From which his eyes could not be screened.
So, full of wild rage, he had smote her,
And laughed o'er her corpse where it lay;
Then flung himself down alongside her,
And slept till the dawning of day.

He slept? Aye, and dreamt of his dead wife!—
A peaceful and beautiful dream;
He saw her once more in her beauty,
Set about with love's heavenly beam;
On his breast, crowned with smiles she was leaning,
As his dear wife beloved and caressed;
For the bottle was broken forever,
And Joe was a *man* with the best.

But 't was only a dream—yes, a dream, sirs;—
His poor wife lay dead by his side;
The warm blood still clammily oozing
From a wound on her head, gaping wide!

While *he* still lay there, all unconscious
Of the terrible crime he had wrought,
Till the dawn, looking in on that night's work,
Avenging discovery brought!

Was it only a nightmare? Ah, no, sirs;—
Rough hands on Joe's shoulders were laid,
And voices all harsh, took his hearing,
As he started, and stared, half afraid.
God! what could it mean—the crowd 'round him—
Thus to wake in the hands of the law?
Ah, that form stretched all stirless before him!
Surrounded by horror and awe!

A woman? Yes, only a woman!
No! surely it was n't his wife?
She seemed dead! and he wrestled for freedom,
As a doomed man will struggle for life.
"It is she! gracious God! Is she dying?
Or dead, sirs?—say, tell if you can?
Unhand me! who murdered my poor wife?"
And a voice answered—*thou art the man!*

There was silence and heart-thrilling horror!
Joe's breath went and came with a gasp;
The neighbors had entered and found him—
The hatchet blood-stained in his grasp!
"My poor wife! my poor wife! oh, heaven!
Who loved me, alas, sirs, too well—
'Twas the brandy that wrought all the mischief!"
And they dragged him away to the cell

Why lengthen a heart-moving story?
The law took its just-handed course;

Joe, escaping the terrible gallows,
Was doomed to eternal remorse—
A lifetime of penal exactments,
Felon-chains, with their soul-searing chime.
But if tears are accepted in heaven,
Joe has wept out all trace of his crime.

THE ELF-CHILD.

LITTLE Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups an' saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep,
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board an' keep;
An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun
A-list'nin' to the witch tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs—
An' when he went to bed at night, away upstairs,
His mammy heerd him holler, an' his daddy heard him bawl,
An' when they turn the kivvers down he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,

An' seeked him up the chimbly-flue, an' everywheres, I guess,
But all they ever found was this, his pants an' round-about:—
An' the gobble-uns'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,
An' make fun of ever'one an' all her blood-an-kin.
An' one't, when they was "company," an' old folks was there,
She mocked 'em, an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide!
They was two great Big Black things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she knowed what she's about!
An' the gobble-uns'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes Woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away—
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond an' dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, and dry the orphant's tear,

An' he'p the po' an' needy ones, 'at clusters all about,
Er the gobble-uns'll git you.
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

CANDOR.

"I know what you're going to say," she said,
And she stood up, looking uncommonly tall;
"You are going to speak of the hectic fall
And say you're sorry the summer's dead,
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And I can imagine what made it so.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said;
"You're going to ask if I forget
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me"—here she dropped her head
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day?
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said;
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme.
And" her clear glance fell, and her cheek grew red—
"And have I noticed your tone was queer,
Why, everbody has seen it here!
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," I said;
You are going to say you've been much annoyed,
And I'm short of tact—you will say devoid—
And I'm clumsy, and awkward, and call me Ted,
And I'll bear abuse like a dear old lamb,
And you'll have me, any way, just as I am.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Ye—es," she said.

THE LEGEND OF THE ORGAN-BUILDER.

DAY by day the Organ-builder in his lonely chamber wrought;
Day by day the soft air trembled to the music of his thought;

Till at last the work was ended, and no organ voice so grand
Ever yet had soared responsive to the master's magic hand.

Ay, so rarely was it builded that whenever groom and bride
Who in God's sight were well pleasing in the church stood side by side,

Without touch or breath the organ of itself began to play,
And the very airs of heaven through the soft gloom seemed to stray.

He was young, the Organ-builder, and o'er all the land his fame
Ran with fleet and eager footsteps. like a swiftly rushing flame.

All the maidens heard the story; all the maidens blushed and smiled,
By his youth and wondrous beauty and his great renown beguiled.

So he sought and won the fairest, and the wedding day was set:
Happy day—the brightest jewel in the glad year's coronet!

But when they then portal entered, he forget his lovely bride—
Forgot his love, forgot his God, and his heart swelled high with pride.

"Ah!" thought he, "how great a master am I! When the organ plays,
How the vast cathedral arches will re-echo with my praise!"

Up the aisle the gay procession moved. The altar shone afar,
With its every candle gleaming through soft shadows, like a star.

But he listened, listened, listened, with no thought of love or prayer,
For the swelling notes of triumph from his organ standing there.

All was silent. Nothing heard he save the priest's low monotone,
And the bride's robe trailing softly o'er the floor of fretted stone.

Then his lips grew white with anger. Surely God was pleased with him
Who had built the wondrous organ for His temple vast and dim?

Whose the fault, then? Hers—the maiden standing meekly at his side!
Flamed his jealous rage, maintaining she was false to him—his bride.

Vain were all her protestations, vain her innocence and truth;
On that very night he left her to her anguish and her ruth.

* * * * * * *

Far he wandered to a country wherein no man knew his name,
For ten weary years he dwelt there, nursing still his wrath and shame.

Then his haughty heart grew softer, and he thought by night and day
Of the bride he had deserted, till he hardly dared to pray—

Thought of her, a spotless maiden, fair and beautiful and good;

Thought of his relentless anger that had cursed her womanhood;

Till his yearning grief and penitence at last were all complete,

And he longed with bitter longing, just to fall down at her feet.

* * * * * * *

Ah! how throbbed his heart when, after many a weary day and night,
Rose his native towers before him, with the sunset glow alight!

Through the gates into the city on he pressed with eager tread;

There he met a long procession—mourners following the dead.

"Now why weep ye so, good people? and whom bury ye to-day?
Why do yonder sorrowing maidens scatter flowers along the way?

"Has some saint gone up to heaven?" "Yes," they answered, weeping sore;
For the Organ-builder's saintly Wife our eyes shall see no more;

"And because her days were given to the service of God's poor,
From His church we mean to bury her See! yonder is the door."

No one knew him; no one wondered when he cried out, white with pain;
No one questioned when with pallid lips, he poured his tears like rain.

"'Tis some one whom she has comforted who mourns
with us," they said,
As he made his made his way unchallenged, and bore the
coffin's head.

Bore it through the open portal, bore it up the echoing
aisle,
Let it down before the altar, where the lights burned clear
the while.
When, oh, hark! the wondrous organ of itself began to
play
Strains of rare, unearthly sweetness, never heard until that
day.

All the vaulted arches rang with music, sweet and clear;
All the air was filled with glory, as of angels hovering
near;
And ere yet the strain was ended, he who bore the coffin's
head,
With the smile of one forgiven, gently sank beside it—
dead.

They who raised the body knew him, and they laid him
by his bride;
Down the aisle and o'er the threshold they were carried,
side by side;

While the organ played a dirge that no man ever heard
before.
And then softly sank to silence—silence kept for ever-
more.

THE PRIDE OF BATTERY B.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN towered upon our right, far off the river lay,
And over on the wooded height we held their lines at bay,
At last the muttering guns were still; the day died slow and wan;
At last the gunners' pipes did fill, the sergeant's yarns began;
When, as the wind a moment blew aside the fragrant flood
Our brierwoods raised, within our view a little maiden stood,
A tiny tot of six or seven, from fireside fresh she seemed,
(Of such a little one in heaven one soldier often dreamed).
And as we stared, one little hand went to her curly head
In grave salute. "And who are you?" at length the sergeant said.
"And where's your home?" he growled again. She lisped out, "Who is me?
Why, don't you know? I'm little Jane, the pride of Battery B.
My home? Why that was burned away, and pa and ma are dead,
And so I ride the guns all day along with Sergeant Ned.
And I've a drum that's not a toy, a cap with feathers too,
And I march beside the drummer boy on Sundays at review.
But now our 'bacca's all give out, the men can't have their smoke,
And so they're cross; why even Ned won't play with me and joke.

And the big colonel said to-day—I hate to hear him swear—
He'd give a leg for a good pipe like the Yanks had over there.
And so I thought when beat the drum, and the big guns were still,
I'd creep beneath the tent and come out here across the hill,
And beg, good Mister Yankee men, you'd give me some Lone Jack;
Please do! When we get some again I'll surely bring it back.
Indeed I will, for Ned, says he, if I do what I say,
I'll be a general yet, maybe, and ride a prancing bay."
We brimmed her tiny apron o'er. You should have heard her laugh,
As each man from his scanty store shook out a generous half.
To kiss the little mouth stooped down a score of grimy men,
Until the sergeant's husky voice said "'Tention, squad!" and then
We gave her escort, till good night the pretty waif we bid,
And watched her toddle out of sight,—Or else 'twas tears that hid
Her tiny form,—nor turned about a man, nor spoke a word,
Till after awhile, a far hoarse shout upon the wind we heard.
We sent it back, and cast sad eyes upon the scene around,
A baby's hand had touched the tie that brothers once had bound.
That's all; save when the dawn awoke again the work of hell,

And through the sullen clouds of smoke the screaming
missiles fell,
Our general often rubbed his glass and marveled much to
see
Not a single shell that whole day fell in the camp of Bat-
tery B.

SUNDAY FISHIN'.

HEYO! you niggers, dah, I like ter know
Wut dat you up to yere! Well, toe by sho!
Ef you ain't fishin' on de good Lawd's day,
Des like you done gone clah forgit de way
Up to de meetin'-'ouse! Yere, come erlong
Er me, en *I'll* show you de place you b'long.

I tells you wut, boys, dis yere chile is had
Speunce er Sunday fishin', en he glad
Dat he's alive! De las' time dat I broke
De Sabbaf-day dis way, it wa'n't no joke—
You heered me now! Dat wuz de time, you know,
I ketched de debble, en I thought fer sho,
Dat he'd ketch me!

You see dis yere de way
It wuz: I tuk my pole one Sabbaf-day
En went down to de river, at de place
Wut I kep' baited, up above de race.
Dey use ter be a little dogwood-tree
Up on de bank, des big ernough fer me
To set en fish in; en I use ter clime
Into it alluz in high-water time;
It growed right on the steep bank's aidge, en lent
'Way out above de water.

W'en I went
Up dah dat day de muddy river den
Had riz en overflowed 'bout nine or ten
Feet fum de bank, en so I tuck en roll
My breeches up, en waded wid my pole
Out to de tree, en clime into de fawk,
En 'gin ter fish.

'Twa'n't long befo' my cawk
Duckt down clean outer sight, en den I felt
De pole jerkt mos' away. I lay I helt
On to dat pole, but 'twa'n't no mortal use—
Dat fish wuz bound to make sump'n come loose,
I had a monst'ous strong big cat-fish line,
En so I tuk en fix my legs entwine
Erround dat tree, en froze on to de pole,
'Termint to swing 'twell sump'n los' der hol'.

But Laws-a-massy! 'twa'n't no yethly use:
Fo' long I felt dat tree a-givin' loose;
En treckly down she come, sho' nough, kerflop,
Into de b'ilin water, me on top,
Yes, sir, right in the river; den dat thing
Wut I done ketched hit give a suddint swing,
En' way hit tuck straight down de stream, wid me,
Er follern atter, settin' on de tree!

Sakes, how we trabbled! en'z we rolled along,
Hit struck me all to wunst sump'n 'uz wrong
Erbout dat fish! He was a pow'ful sight
Too peart. En den I seed a jay-bird light,
En keep a-lightin' 'long de bank in front;
En den a mush-rat swosh aroun' en grunt,

En tu'n a water-snake aloose, en den
De snake swum *wid his head up stream* 'twell w'en
He got in front er me, den tuck en dive
Straight down; en atter dat — good saints alive! —
A she king fisher up an squawk, en sail
Across, en drap a feather fum her tail.
Good Lawd! I knowed it wa'n't no use denine
De debble got a holt dat hook en line,
Headin' wi' me fer home, en strikin' out
A-clippin' by de shortes' water route!
Dat's wut *I* got by goin' dat Sabbaf-day
A-fishin'. 'Twas a caution, folks, de way
We shot dat river, makin' down it straight
Fer Cooper's dam, right todes de "Debble's Gate,"
Dey calls dat suck whah all dat wunst goes in
Ain't never seed, dey say, to rise agin.

De fus' thing wut I thought I better do
Wuz tu'n aloose dat pole; but, thinks I, "Shoo!
I couldn't fool *him* dat away, en he
Mout tu'n loose too, en grab aholt er me."

En den I 'gin to pray, en prayed en prayed —
Law love you, chillun! reck'n I fa'ly made
De woods howl, 'seechin' dat de throne er grace
Fergimme fer backslidin', en make 'as'e
Ter git me out dat scrape; en w'iles I prayed
I helt de pole wid one han' en I laid
Holt of my galluses wld t'er, en to'e
Um off; en den I tied de pole befo'
Me to de tree, so es to make Ole Nick
Still b'lieve I helt on to it.

Putty quick
I seed out in de river, right ahead,
Joe Taylor's fish-trap, and de good Lawd led
Us 'long up side it, en you mighty right
I jumpt on to it mighty free en light!
En Mr. Smarty Nick, wid his ole tree,
Sailed on, a-thinkin' still he haulin' me!
Dat's wut de matter!
Niggers, dat de way
I quit dis fishing' on de Sabbaf-day.
Dah ain't no pole ermong yo' all *I'd* tech;
En if you ain't a-hankerin' to ketch
Sump'n you didn't barg'n fer, I lay
You better put dem hooks en lines away.

Fer members uv de church, dis yere gits me!
Uv all the owdacious doin's I ever see,
Dis tak'n' de Sabbaf-day in vain's de wuss
Fer mortifyin' de morals uv—*You Gus*!
Look at dat bite you got! Law bless de Lam;
He's a joedahter! Look out dah, doe jam
Dat pole up dah! You trine, peahs like to me,
To knock de fish fum off dat 'simmon tree;
Now look Doe jerk dat way Law love my soul,
You gwiner lose 'im! Yere, gimme dat pole;
I'll show you how to lan' 'im! Stiddy, now—
Pulls like a cat-fish. Hit's de boss, I swow!
Des wait a minute; one mo' pull is boun'
To git 'im. Dah he is, safe on de groun',

Hain't he a whopper, dough! Hoo—wee! I lay
Y'all dat ah fish dis blessid day 'ull weigh

'Bout forty—Laws-a-massy! ef I ain't
Done broke de Sabbaf 'fo I knowed it! 'Tain't
No use to laugh, you reckon I wuz gwine
Ter let dat fish take off dis pole en line?

But 'tain't too late, I'll fix it mighty quick.
Yere, Gus, gimme dat fish—you neenter kick;
I's guine, fer sho, ter pitch it right away
Back in de water. Yere, leggo, I say!
You'll peck de wrong June-bug, you biggity goose!
Fo' God, now, nigger, ef you doe tu'n loose
Dis fish, I'll chuck *you* in de river! Dah!
Hit's in. En now my conshus is mo' clah.

THE REASON WHY.

IT isn't that I've got a thing agin' you, Parson Peak,
Nor agin' the many "tried and true" I've met there every week,
It's not for this I've stayed away so many Sabba' days
From the cherished little meetin'-house where oft I've joined in praise.
But listen—if you care to know—and I will tell you all.
I think 'twas about two year ago—or was it three, last fall?
The wealthy members voted that they'd have the seats made free,
And most of us was willin' with the notion to agree.

Perhaps the meanin' of the word I didn't quite understand;
For the Sunday after, walkin' 'long with Elsie hand in hand

(You know the little blue-eyed girl—her mother now is dead,
And I am Elsie's grandpa; but let me go ahead).
Well, thinkin' o' the Master and how homelike it would be
To take a seat just anywhere, now that the seats was free,
I walked in at the open door, and up the center aisle,
And sat down tired, but happy in the light of Elsie's smile.

I listened to your preachin' with an "amen" in my heart,
And when the hymns was given out, I tried to do my part;
And my love seemed newly kindled for the one great power above.
And something seemed to answer back: "For love I give thee love."
But when the benediction came, and we was passin' out,
A whispered sentence, with my name, caused me to turn about.
'Twas not exactly words like this, but words that meant it all.
"It's strange that paupers never know their place is by the wall."

It wasn't 'bout myself I cared for what the speaker said,
But the little blossom at my side, with pretty upturned head;
And lookin' down at Elsie, there, I thought of Elsie's mother,
And thoughts my better nature scorned, I tried in vain to smother.

I've been to meetin' twice since then and set down by the wall,
But kept a thinkin'—thinkin'—till my thoughts was turned to gall;
And when the old familiar hymns was given out to sing,
One look at Elsie's shinin' curls would choke my utterin'.

And so I thought it best awhile to stay at home and praise,
Or take a walk in field or wood, and there trace out His ways.
"It's better so", my old heart said, "than gather with the throng,
And let your feelin's rankle with a real or fancied wrong."
But I'm prayin', parson, all the time (and wish you'd help me pray),
When one and all are gathered home in the great comin' day;
When men are weighed by honest deeds and love to fellow-men,
I won't be thought a pauper in the light I'm seen in then.

TWO.

IN the bitter gloom of a winter's morn
A babe was born.
The snow piled high against wall and door,
On the mighty oak boughs the frost lay hoar:
But the warmth and light shrined the happy face,
So softly pillowed with down and lace.

The bells clashed out from the reeling spire,
The night was reddened by many a fire:
The cottage smiled for joy at the hall,
As the poor man answered the rich man's call,
And his lot for a day was less forlorn,
Because a little child was born.

In the bitter gloom of a winter's morn
A babe was born.
The snow piled high in the narrow street,
Trodden and stained by hurrying feet;
On the hearth the embers lay cold and dead,
And the woman who crouched on the damp straw bed
Muttered a curse as the drunken sport
Swelled up to her lair from the crowded court.
Riot without and squalor within,
To welcome a waif to a world of sin,
And a pitiful life was the more forlorn,
Because a little child was born.

In a smiling home amid sun and flowers,
A child grew up,
Calm, and beauty, and culture and wealth,
To give power to life and grace to health;
Gentle influence, thought and care,
To train the darling to love and prayer;
The stately heirlooms of place and blood,
To crown the flower of maidenhood,
With childhood's pearly innocence kept
On the folded leaves where the sunshine slept.
So sweetly and richly formed the cup
Life held, where the happy girl grew up.

Where "home" was a vague and empty word
A child grew up.
Where oath and blow were the only law,
And ugly misery all she saw;
Where want and sin drew hand in hand,
Round the haunts that disgrace our Christian land;
A loveless, hopeless, joyless life
Of crime and wretchedness, struggle and strife!
Never a glimpse of the sweet spring skies,
To soften the flash in the wild young eyes;
Or a drop of peace in the poisoned cup
Life held, where the reckless girl grew up.

On a summer eve as the low sun set,
A woman died.
At the close of a long and tranquil life,
Honored and guarded, mother and wife,
With gentle hands whose work was done,
And gentle head whose crown was won,
With children's children at her knee,
And friends who watched her reverently;
Knowing her memory would remain,
Treasured by grief, that scarce was pain,
With her heart's dearest at her side,
Blessing and blessed, the woman died.

On a summer eve as the low sun set,
A woman died.
She had fought the failing fight so long,
But time was cruel, and hard, and strong.
Without a faith, without a prayer,
With none to aid and none to care;

Without a trace upon the page,
From desperate youth to loathsome age,
But sin and sorrow, wrong and chance,
And bitter blank of ignorance;
With not a hand to help or save,
Without a hope beyond the grave,
Tossed in the black stream's rushing tide,
Unmourned, unmissed, the woman died,
And we are all akin, runs the kindly creed.
Oh, the riddle of life is hard to read!

THE MIDSHIPMITE.

WELL! that's a woman I pity;
Get out of your easy chair—
Look out of the window,—that woman in black,
With glory of red-gold hair,
Why does she carry a primrose cross?
And what has her misery been?
She has lost her only child, my lad,
And is walking to Kensal Green.

We prate of our little troubles,
We men of muscle and brain,
We curse if our pipe of peace don't draw,
And howl at the wind and rain;
And those of our band who scribble a bit,
Are instantly down in luck
If they're stabbed in the back by an ignorant fool
Who hasn't a grain of pluck.

'Tis grim to feel you're honest, no doubt,
Possessing a soul to save,
When editors bribe some desolate cad
To hound you as cheat or knave.
'Tis God will winnow the false and true,
Who knows what our sins have been,
But think of poor innocent Margaret Gray
Who is walking to Kensal Green.

What is her story? Well, light your pipe
And sit you down in your chair
Two chapters—the one is headed of love,
The other is marked despair.
I've seen some joy, but the park at Knowle
Was never in spring so gay
As when Margaret Welsh in Seven Oaks church
Was married to Bernard Gray.

'Twas a runaway match, in the weald of Kent.
That was blessed by the parson prim.
His life was given to art—the stage—
And hers was given to him.
Never a man have I known so pure,
Never a woman so brave,
As was married that day in Seven Oaks church
When the primroses covered the grave.

They talk of love in an empty way;
But this was the pride of life,
When Bernard seemed in a happy dream
And thrilled at the touch of his wife.
Whenever they kissed, their eyes for love
Were brimming with tears of joy.

And the prize of happiness came next spring
By the birth of their baby boy.

What have they done to deserve God's wrath?
In his old mysterious way
Death stretched his finger out and touched
The heart of Bernard Gray.
Life was too happy for him, poor lad;
He had been fading for years, they said,
And the mother and child were asleep one night
When Bernard Gray lay dead.

Down like an avalanche swept despair
O'er the house where love had smiled,
Crushing the innocent mother there
By the side of her only child.
"As you make your bed, you must tumble down,"
Is the rule of this worldly life;
And there wasn't a soul to pity the fate
Of the destitute actor's wife.

For six long years,—as I live 'tis true—
In the midst of the city din;
She slaved and starved for her baby boy
And her soul was free from sin.
When at last, they said, for the actor's child
They had luckily found a part,
So she said, "The gift that an artist gave
I will dedicate pure to art."

They took him away from his mother's side,
And her heart was sick and sore,
Though her baby boy was the life and soul
Of "Her Majesty's Pinafore."

Whenever the theater rang with cheers,
And echoed with wild delight,
A heart in the gallery shook with fear
For the fate of the midshipmite.

For the boy was odd, old-fashioned,
And over clever; 'twas said
He had the strangest fancies,
And complained of an aching head.
And one day, half in earnest,
Possibly half in fun,
He said, "Who will keep us, mother,
When Pinafore's ceased to run?"

'Twas the close of a heartless winter
That changed to a cheerless spring,
With wind in the east, that caught with a chill
The child in a drafty wing,—
When the mother found to her horror
The boy was too ill to sup,
And he said in his curious manner,
"The Pinafore run is up.

"Give me a kiss, my mother,
And put me away to bed;
For my limbs are weak—I tremble—
I've pains in my throbbing head.
I feel to-night so weary—"
When out of his tuneful store
He muttered in a childlike way
Of her Majesty's Pinafore.

"O! say that you love me, darling,"
She murmured, pale with fears;

But he answered, "Hardly ever,"
As she wiped away her tears.
And then as the nightmare vision
The mind of the sleeper haunts,
He said, "You'll be kind — to my — sisters,
And my cousins, and my aunts."

On the ship that had been his playground
He sailed to his rest at last,
With a cheer for his baby comrades
As he clung to the yielding mast.
And he moaned out, racked with torture
As the sand in the hour glass ran,
"Well, in spite of all temptation,
Your boy is an Englishman."

They buried the little fellow
Quite close to his father's side,
Just seven years from the joyful day
His mother was made a bride.
So there's the story of that which is,
(God knows what might have been!)
And this is the reason why Margaret Gray
Is walking to Kensal Green.

CHICKENS COME HOME TO ROOST.

YOU may take the world as it comes and goes,
And you will be sure to find
That fate will square the account she owes,
Whoever comes out behind;
And all things bad that a man has done,
By whatsoever induced,
Return at last to him, one by one,
As the chickens come home to roost,

You may scrape and toil and pinch and save,
  While your hoarded wealth expands,
Till the cold, dark shadow of the grave
  Is nearing your life's last sands;
You will have your balance struck some night,
  And you'll find your hoard reduced;
You'll view your life in another light
  When the chickens come home to roost.

You can stint your soul and starve your heart
  With the husks of a barren creed,
But Christ will know if you play a part,—
  Will know in your hour of need;
And then as you wait for death to come
  What hope can there be deduced
From creed alone? You will lie there dumb
  While your chickens come home to roost.

Sow as you will, there's a time to reap,
  For the good and bad as well,
And conscience, whether we wake or sleep,
  Is either a Heaven or Hell.
And every wrong will find its place,
  And every passion loosed
Drifts back and meets you face to face—
  When the chickens come home to roost.

Whether you're over or under the sod
  The result will be the same;
You cannot escape the hand of God,
  You must bear your sin or shame.
No matter what's carved on a marble slab,
  When the items are all produced
You'll find that St. Peter was keeping "tab"
  And that chickens come home to roost.

THE LITTLE WHITE HEARSE.

AS the little white hearse went glimmering by—
The man on the coal cart jerked his lines,
And smutted the lid of either eye,
And turned and stared at the business signs;
And the street-car driver stopped and beat
His hands on his shoulders and gazed up street
Till his eye on the long track reached the sky—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

As the little white hearse went glimmering by—
A stranger petted a ragged child
In the crowded walk, and she knew not why,
But he gave her a coin for the way she smiled;
And a bootblack thrilled with a pleasure strange
As a customer put back his change
With a kindly hand and a grateful sigh—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

As the little white hearse went glimmering by—
A man looked out of a window dim,
And his cheeks were wet and his heart was dry—
For a dead child even were dear to him!
And he thought of his empty life and said;
"Loveless alive, and loveless dead,
Nor wife nor child in earth or sky!"—
As the little white hearse went glimmering by.

BACK WHERE THEY USED TO BE,

PAP'S got his patent right and rich as all creation;
But where's the peace and comfort that we all had before?

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's station—
Back where we used to be so happy and so pore!

The likes of us a-livin' here! It's jest a mortal pity
To see us in this great big house, with cyarpets on the stairs,
And the pump right in the kitchen; and the city! city! city!—
And nothing but the city all around us everywheres!

Climb clean above the roof and look from the steeple,
And never see a robin, nor a beech or ellum tree!
And right here in earshot of at least a thousan' people,
And none that neighbors with us, or we want to go and see!

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's station—
Back where the latch-string 's a-hangin' from the door,
And every neighbor 'round the place is dear as a relation—
Back where we used to be so happy and so pore!

I want to see the Wiggenses, the whole kit and bilin'
A drivin' up from Shallow Ford to stay the Sunday through,
And I want to see 'em hitchin' at their son-in-law's, and pilin'
Out there at Lizy Ellen's, like they used to do!

I want to see the piece-quilts the Jones girls is makin',
And I want to pester Laury 'bout their freckled hired hand,
And joke her 'bout the widower she come purt' nigh a-takin',
Till her pap got his pension 'lowed in time to save his land.

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's station—
  Back where they's nothin' aggervatin' any more,
Shet away safe in the wood around the old location—
  Back where we used to be so happy and so pore!

I want to see Marindy and he'p her with her sewin',
  And hear her talk so lovin' of her man that's dead and
    gone,
And stand up with Emanual to show me how he's growin',
  And smile as I have saw her 'fore she put her mournin'
    on.

And I want to see the Samples on the old lower Eighty,
  Where John, our oldest boy, he was took and buried, for
His own sake and Katy's,—and I want to cry with Katy
  As she reads all his letters over, writ from the war.

What's in all this grand life and high situation,
  And nary pink nor hollyhawk bloomin' at the door?
Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's station—
  Back where we used to be so happy and so pore!

NEARER TO THEE.

"NEARER, my God, to Thee," rose on the air,
  Each note an ecstasy, joyous and rare,
Tones that were triumph peals shrined in a song,
Breathing of victory gained over wrong;
Out on the listening air, mocking at fear,
Ringing its clarion cry, fearless and clear,
Up from a soul redeemed, noble and free,
"Nearer my God to thee, nearer to Thee."

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," thrilled on the air,
Each note an agony, linked with a prayer,
Out on a sinking ship, land out of sight,
Borne by the wailing winds into the night;
White-maned and angry waves howling in scorn,
Wild shrieks of helpless hearts over them borne;
Still rang one trusting voice high o'er the sea,
"Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee."

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," thrilled on the breeze,
Far in a heathen land, 'neath the palm trees,
Rising in soulful notes, earnest and calm,
Trust and tranquillity winging the psalm;
Fierce faces round about, fever and death
Mixed with the tropic flowers' balm-laden breath;
One lonely child of God bending the knee,
Saying with uplifted face, "Nearer to Thee."

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," echoed a street
Worn by the night tread of murderer's feet,
Up from a cellar, dark, noisome with slime,
Out o'er a motley crowd hideous with crime;
Curses and oaths obscene fouling the ear,
Still rose the trusting notes, trembling but clear;
Poverty, suffering, singing their plea,
"Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee."

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," rose from a room
Where a man, old and blind, sat in the gloom,
While his poor hands caressed, there on the bed,
One who was once his bride, silent and dead.
Worn were the wrinkled hands folded in sleep ;
Closed were the patient eyes, slumbering deep.

"Called to her home," he said, "waiting for me;
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee."

"Nearer, my God, to Thee," triumph or prayer,
Winging its way every hour on the air,
O'er the whole world from a numberless throng,
Blending their smiles and their sighs in its song;
Priceless the memories, sweet and profound,
Linked like a chaplet of pearls by its sound.
Grant its petition till all the world be
"Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee."

ARTIE'S "AMEN."

THEY were Methodist twain of the ancient school
Who always followed the wholesome rule
That whenever the preacher in meeting said
Aught that was good for the heart or head
His hearers should pour their feelings out
In a loud "Amen," or a godly shout.

Three children had they, all honest boys,
Whose youthful sorrows and youthful joys
They shared as your loving parents will,
While tending them ever through good and ill.

One day—'twas a bleak, cold Sabbath morn,
When the sky was dark, and the earth forlorn—
These boys with a caution not to roam,
Were left by the elder folk at home.

But scarce had they gone when the wooden frame
Was seen by the tall stove pipe aflame:
And out of ther reach high, high and higher,
Rose the red coils of the serpent fire.

With startled sight for awhile they gazed,
As the pipe grew hot and the woodwork blazed;
Then up, though his heart beat wild with dread,
The eldest climbed to a shelf o'erhead,
And soon with a sputter and hiss of steam,
The flame died out like an angry dream.

When the father and mother came back that day—
They had gone to a neighboring church to pray—
Each looked, but with half averted eye,
On the awful doom which had just passed by.

And then the father began to praise
His boys with a tender and sweet amaze.
"Why, how did you manage, Tom, to climb
And quench the threatening flames in time
To save your brothers, and save yourself?"
"Well, father, I mounted the strong oak shelf
By the help of the table standing nigh."
"And what," quoth the father, suddenly,
Turning to Jemmy the next in age.
"Did you do to quiet the fiery rage?"
"I brought the pail and dipper, too,
And so it was that the water flew
All over the flames and quenched them quite."
A mist came over the father's sight,
A mist of pride and of righteous joy,
As he turned at last to his youngest boy—
A gleeful urchin scarce three years old,
With his dimpling cheeks and hair of gold.
"Come, Artie, I'm sure you weren't afraid:
Now tell me in what way you tried to aid

This fight with the fire." "Too small am I,"
Artie replied with a half drawn-sigh,
"To fetch like Jemmie, and work like Tom;
So I stood just here for a minute, dumb,
Because, papa, I was frightened some;
But I prayed 'Our Father'; and then—and then
I shouted as loud as I could, 'Amen!'"

NOTHIN' TO SAY.

NOTHIN' to say, my daughter! Nothin' at all to say!—
Girls that's in love, I've noticed, ginerally have their way!
Yer mother did afore you, when her folks objected to me—
Yit here I am, and here you air! and yer mother—where is she?

You looks lots like your mother. Purty much the same in size;
And about the same complected; and favor about the eyes.
Like her, too, about livin' here, because she couldn't stay;
It'll most seem like you was dead like her!—but I hain't got nothin' to say!

She left you her little Bible—writ yer name acrost the page—
And left her ear-bobs for you, if ever you come of age.
I've allus kep' 'em and gyuarded 'em, but ef yer goin' away—
Nothin' to say, my daughter! Nothin' at all to say!

You don't rickollect her, I reckon? No, you wasn't a year old then,

And now yer—how old air yer? Why, child, not twenty, when?
And yer nex' birthday's in April? And you want to get married that day?
I wisht yer mother was livin'!—but—I hain't got nothin' to say!

Twenty year! and as good a gyrl as parent ever found!
There's a straw ketched on ter yer dress there—I'll bresh it off—turn round.
(Her mother was jest twenty when us two run away!)
Nothin' to say, my daughter! Nothin' at all to say!

SOMETHIN' TO SAY.

SOMETHIN' to say, my daughter? Well, you bet I've somethin' to say!
Some fathers might let things take their course, but your dad ain't built that way.
Yer see, I work for a livin' now, and I earn enough for two;
But I'll be gol-darned if I'm goin' to feed another along with you.

If you wanted to marry a decent man, who was earnin' decent pay,
Most likely I'd tell you to go ahead, and hurry and set the day;
But I know the wuthless dude you want, and I know his little lay,
Somethin' to say, my daughter? Well, you bet I've somethin' to say!

Now, don't be cryin', daughter, and don't feel hard at me—
You know you'd better be single, if only you could see,
But to think of your marryin' such a man as lazy young Dandy Jim,
Though if he knew enough to earn his salt, don't know's I'd object to him.

It isn't him at all, you say; but the old man millionaire?—
Why, child, you make your father proud; just let me kiss you—there!
And you want me to add my blessing, and come to the house and stay?
Well, I guess you can manage your own machine, and I ain't got nothin' to say.

I WOULDN'T,—WOULD YOU?

WHEN a lady is seen at a party or ball—
Her eyes vainly turned in her fits of conceit,
As she peers at the gentlemen, fancying all
Are enchained by her charms, and would kneel at her feet—
With each partner coquetting—to nobody true—
I wouldn't give much for her chances—would you?

When an upstart is seen on the flags strutting out,
With his hat cocked aslant, and a glass in his eye,
And thick clouds of foul smoke he stands puffing about,
As he inwardly says: "What a stunner am I,"
While he twists his moustache, for the ladies to view,
I wouldn't give much for his senses—would you?

When a wife runs about at her neighbors to pry,
Leaving children at home, unprotected, to play;
Till she starts back in haste at the sound of their cry,
And finds they've been fighting while mother's away.
Sugar eaten, panes broken, the wind blowing through;
I wouldn't give much for her comfort—would you?

When a husband is idle, neglecting his work,
In the public house snarling with quarrelsome knaves,
When he gambles with simpletons, drinks like a Turk,
While his good wife at home for the poor children slaves,
And that home is quite destitute—painful to view—
I wouldn't give much for his morals—would you?

When a boy at his school, lounging over his seat,
Sits rubbing his head, and neglecting his book,
While he fumbles his pockets for something to eat,
Yet pretendeth to read when his master may look,
Though he boasts to his parents how much he can do,
I wouldn't give much for his progress—would you?

When a husband and wife keep their secrets apart,
Not a word to "my spouse" about this or on that;
When a trifle may banish the pledge of their heart,
And he naggles—she naggles—both contradict flat;
Though unequaled their love when its first blossoms blew,
I wouldn't give much for their quiet—would you?

When a man who has lived here for none but himself,
Feels laid on his strong frame the cold hand of death,
When all fade away—wife, home, pleasure and pelf,
And he yields back to God both his soul and his breath,
As up to the Judgment that naked soul flew—
I wouldn't give much for his Heaven—would you?

PAPA'S LETTER.

I WAS sitting in my study,
Writing letters when I heard,
"Please, dear mamma, Mary told me
Mamma mustn't be 'isturbed;

"But I's tired of the kitty,
Want some ozzer fing to do!
Witing letters, is 'ou, mamma?
Tan't I wite a letter, too?"

"Not now, darling, mamma's busy;
Run and play with kitty, now."
"No, no, mamma, me wite letter—
Tan if 'ou will show me how."

I would paint my darling's portrait
As his sweet eyes searched my face—
Hair of gold and eyes of azure,
Form of childish, witching grace.

But the eager face was clouded,
As I slowly shook my head,
Till I said, "I'll make a letter
Of you, darling boy, instead."

So I parted back the tresses
From his forehead high and white,
And a stamp in sport I pasted
'Mid its waves of golden light.

Then I said, "Now, little letter,
Go away, and bear good news."
And I smiled as down the staircase
Clattered loud the little shoes.

Leaving me, the darling hurried
Down to Mary in his glee:
"Mamma's witing lots of letters;
I's a letter, Mary—see?"

No one heard the little prattler
As once more he climbed the stair,
Reached his little cap and tippet,
Standing on the entry chair.

No one heard the front door open,
No one saw the golden hair
As it floated o'er his shoulders
In the crisp October air.

Down the street the baby hastened
Till he reached the office door.
"I's a letter, Mr. Postman,
Is there room for any more?

"Cause dis letter's doin' to papa:
Papa lives with God, 'ou know.
Mamma sent me for a letter;
Does 'ou fink 'at I tan go?"

But the clerk in wonder answered
"Not to-day, my little man."
"Den I'll find anuzzer office,
'Cause I must go if I tan."

Fain the clerk would have detained him,
But the pleading face was gone,
And the little feet were hastening—
By the busy crowd swept on.

Suddenly the crowd was parted,
People fled to left and right
As a pair of maddened horses
At the moment dashed in sight.

No one saw the baby figure—
No one saw the golden hair,
Till a voice of frightened sweetness
Rang out on the autumn air.

'Twas too late—a moment only
Stood the beauteous vision there,
Then the little face lay lifeless,
Covered o'er with golden hair.

Reverently they raised my darling,
Brushed away the curls of gold,
Saw the stamp upon the forehead,
Growing now so icy cold.

Not a mark the face disfigured,
Showing where a hoof had trod;
But the little life was ended—
"Papa's letter" was with God.

EVENING AT THE FARM.

OVER the hill the farm-boy goes,
His shadow lengthens along the land,
A giant staff in a giant hand;
In the poplar-tree, about the spring,
The katydid begins to sing;
The early dews are falling;
Into the stone heap darts the mink;
The swallows skim the river's brink:

And home to the woodland fly the crows,
When over the hill the farm-boy goes,
Cheerily calling,
"Co', boss! co', boss! co'! co'! co'!"
Farther, farther, over the hill,
Faintly calling, calling still,
"Co', boss! co', boss! co'! co'!"

Into the yard the farmer goes,
With grateful heart, at the close of day;
Harness and chain are hung away;
In the wagon-shed stand yoke and plow;
The straw's in the stack, the hay in the mow,
The cooling dews are falling;
The friendly sheep his welcome bleat,
The pigs come grunting to his feet,
The whinnying mare her master knows,
When into the yard the farmer goes,
His cattle calling!
"Co', boss! co', boss! co'! co'! co'!"
While still the cow-boy far away,
Goes seeking those that have gone astray—
"Co', boss! co', boss! co'! co'!"

Now to her task the milkmaid goes,
The cattle come crowding through the gate,
Lowing, pushing, little and great;
About the trough, by the farm-yard pump,
The frolicsome yearlings frisk and jump,
While the pleasant dews are falling;
The new milch heifer is quick and shy,
But the old cow waits with tranquil eye,

And the white stream into the bright pail flows,
When to her task the milkmaid goes,
Soothingly calling,
"So, boss! so boss! so! so! so!"
The cheerful milkmaid takes her stool,
And sits and milks in the twilight cool,
Saying, "So! so, boss! so! so!"

To supper at last the farmer goes,
The apples are pared, the paper read,
The stories are told, then all to bed.
Without, the cricket's ceaseless song
Makes shrill the silence all night long;
The heavy dews are falling.
The housewife's hand has turned the lock;
Drowsily ticks the kitchen clock;
The household sinks to deep repose,
But still in sleep the farm-boy goes
Singing, calling—
"Co', boss! co', boss! co'! co'! co'!"
And oft the milkmaid in her dreams,
Drums in the pail with the flashing streams,
Murmuring, "So, boss! so."

ST. JOHN THE AGED.

I AM growing very old. This weary head
That hath so often leaned on Jesus' breast,
In days long past that seem almost a dream,
Is bent and hoary with its weight of years.
These limbs that followed Him, my Master, oft,
From Galilee to Judah; yea, that stood

Beneath the cross and trembled with his groans,
Refuse to bear me even through the streets
To preach unto my children, E'en my lips
Refuse to form the words my heart sends forth.
My ears are dull; they scarcely hear the sobs
Of my dear children gathered 'round my couch;
My eyes so dim, they cannot see their tears.
God lays his hand upon me,—yea, his *hand*,
And not his *rod*—the gentle hand that I
Felt, those three years, so often pressed in mind,
In friendship such as passeth woman's love.

I'm old, so old! I cannot recollect
The faces of my friends, and I forget
The words and deeds that make up daily life;
But that dear face, and every word *He* spoke,
Grow more distinct as others fade away,
So that I live with Him and th' holy dead
More than with living.

Some seventy years ago
I was a fisher by the sacred sea.
It was at sunset. How the tranquil tide
Bathed dreamily the pebbles! How the light
Crept up the distant hills, and in its wake
Soft purple shadows wrapped the dewy fields!
And then *He* came and called me. Then I gazed
For the first time on that sweet face. Those eyes
From out of which, as from a window, shone
Divinity, looked on my inmost soul,
And lighted it forever. Then His words
Broke on the silence of my heart, and made

The whole world musical. Incarnate Love
Took hold of me and claimed me for its own;
I followed in the twilight, holding fast
His mantle.

Oh! what holy walks we had,
Thro' harvest fields, and desolate, dreary wastes;
And oftentimes He leaned upon my arm,
Wearied and way-worn. I was young and strong,
And so upbore Him. Lord! now *I* am weak,
And old and feeble. Let me rest on Thee!
So, put Thine arm around me. Closer still!
How strong Thou art! The twilight draws apace;
Come, let us leave these noisy streets and take
The path to Bethany; for Mary's smile
Awaits us at the gate, and Martha's hands
Have long prepared the cheerful evening meal.
Come, James, the Master waits, and Peter, see,
Has gone some steps before.

What say you, friends?
That this is Ephesus, and Christ has gone
Back to His kingdom? Ay, 't is so, 't is so
I know it all; and yet, just now, I seemed
To stand once more upon my native hills
And touch my Master! Oh! how oft I've seen
The touching of His garments bring back strength
To palsied limbs! I feel it has to mine.
Up! bear me once more to my church—once more!
There let me tell them of a Saviour's love;
For, by the sweetness of my Master's voice
Just now, I think He must be very near—

Coming, I trust, to break the veil which time
Has worn so thin that I can see beyond,
And watch His footsteps.

So, raise up my head.
How dark it is! I cannot seem to see
The faces of my flock. Is that the sea
That murmurs so, or is it weeping? Hush!
My little children! God so loved the world
He gave His Son; so love ye one another;
Love God and man, Amen. Now bear me back.
My legacy unto an angry world is this,
I feel my work is finished. Are the streets so full?
What call the folks my name? "The holy John?"
Nay, write me rather, Jesus Christ's beloved,
And lover of my children.

Lay me down
Once more upon my couch, and open wide
The eastern window. See! there comes a light
Like that which broke upon my soul at eve,
When, in the dreary Isle of Patmos, Gabriel came
And touched me on the shoulder. See! it grows
As when we mounted toward the pearly gates.
I know the way! I trod it once before!
And hark! it is the song the ransomed sang
Of glory to the Lamb! How loud it sounds!
And that unwritten one! Methinks my soul
Can join it now. But who are these who crowd
The shining way? O joy! it is the eleven!
With Peter first, how eagerly he looks!
How bright the smiles are beaming on James' face.

I am the last. Once more we are complete
To gather 'round the Paschal feast. My place
Is next my Master. O my Lord! my Lord!
How bright thou art, and yet the very same
I loved in Galilee! 'Tis worth the hundred years
To feel this bliss! So lift me up, dear Lord,
Unto thy bosom, full of perfect peace.
There shall I abide.

I VASH SO GLAD I VASH HERE.

ONE who does not believe in immersion for baptism was holding a protracted meeting, and one night preached on the subject of baptism. In the course of his remarks he said that some believed it necessary to go down into the water, and come up out of it, to be baptized. But this he claimed to be fallacy, for the preposition "into" of the Scriptures should be rendered differently, as it does not mean into at all times. "Moses," he said, "we are told, went up into the mountain; and the Saviour was taken up into a high mountain, etc. Now we do not suppose either went into a mountain, but went unto it. So with going down into the water; it means simply going down close by or near to the water, and being baptized in the ordinary way, by sprinkling or pouring." He carried this idea out fully, and in due season closed his discourse, when an invitation was given for any one so disposed to rise and express his thoughts. Quite a number of his brethren arose and said they were glad they had been present on this occasion, that they were well pleased with the sound sermon they had just heard, and felt their souls greatly blessed. Finally, a corpulent gentle-

man of Teutonic extraction, a stranger to all, arose and broke the silence that was almost painful, as follows:

"Mister Breacher, I is so glad I vash here to-night, for I has had explained to my mint some dings dat I neffer could pelief before. Oh, I is so glad dat into does not mean into at all, but shust close by or near to, for now I can pelief many dings vot I could not pelief. pefore. We reat, Mr. Breacher, dat Taniel vosh cast into de ten of lions, and came out alife. Now, I neffer could pelief dat, for wilet beasts would shust eat him right off; but now it is fery clear to my mint. He vash shust close py or near to, and tid not git into de ten at all. Oh, I ish so glad I vash here to-night. Again we reat dat de Heprew children vash cast into de firish furnace; and dat always look like a peeg story, too, for they would have been purnt up; but it ish all blain to my mint now, for dey was shust cast py or close to de firish furnace. Oh, I vash so glat I vash here to-night. And den, Mr. Breacher, it ish said dat Jonah vash cast into de sea, and taken into de whale's pelly. Now, I neffer could pelief dat, It alwish seem to me to be a peeg fish story, but it ish all blain to my mint now. He vash not into de whale's pelly at all, but shump onto his pack and rode ashore. Oh, I vash so glad I vash here to-night.

"And now, Mister Breacher, if you will shust exblain two more bassages of Scriptures, I shall be, oh, so happy dot I vash here to-night! One of dem ish vhere it saish de vicked shall be cast into a lake dat burns mit fire and primstone alwish. Oh, Mister Breacher, shall I be cast into dat lake if I am vicked, or shust close py or near to—shust near enough to be comfortable? O! I hope you tell me I shall be cast only shust by a good veys off, and I vill pe so glad I vash here to-night. De oder bassage is

dat vich saish, blessed are dey who do dese commandments, dat dey may have right to de dree of life, and enter in droo de gates of de city, and not shust close py or near to—shust near enough to see vat I have lost—and I shall pe so glad I vash here to-night."

SEARCHING FOR THE SLAIN.

HOLD the lantern aside, and shudder not so;
There's more blood to see than this stain on the snow;
There are pools of it, lakes of it, just over there,
And fixed faces all streaked, and crimson-soaked hair.
Did you think when you came, you and I, out to-night
To search for our dead, yon would be a fair sight?

You're his wife; you love him—you think so; and I
Am only his mother; my boy shall not lie
In a ditch with the rest, while my arms can bear
His form to a grave that mine own may soon share.
So, if your strength fails, best go sit by the hearth,
While his mother alone seeks his bed on the earth.

You will go! Then no faintings! Give me the light,
And follow my footsteps,—my heart will lead right.
Ah, God! what is here? a great heap of the slain,
All mangled and gory!—what horrible pain
These beings have died in! Dear mothers, ye weep,
Ye weep, oh, ye weep o'er this terrible sleep.

More! more! Ah! I thought I could never more know
Grief, horror or pity for aught here below,

Since I stood in the porch and heard his chief tell
How brave was my son, how he gallantly fell.
Did they think I cared then to see officers stand
Before my great sorrow, each hat in each hand?

Why, girl, do you feel neither reverence nor fright,
That your red hands turn over toward this dim light
These dead men that stare so? Ah, if you had kept
Your senses this morning ere his comrades had left,
You had heard that his place was worst of them all,—
Not 'mid the stragglers,—where he fought he would fall.

There's the moon thro' the clouds: O Christ, what a scene!
Dost Thou from Thy heavens o'er such visions lean,
And still call this cursed world a footstool of thine?
Hark, a groan! there another,—here in this line
Piled close on each other! Ah! here is the flag,
Torn, dripping with gore;—bah! they died for this rag.

Here's the voice that we seek: poor soul do not start;
We're women, not ghosts. What a gash o'er the heart!
Is there aught we can do? A message to give
To any beloved one? I swear, if I live,
To take it for sake of the words my boy said,
"Home," "mother," "wife," ere he reeled down 'mong the dead.

But, first, can you tell where his regiment stood?
Speak, speak, man, or point; 'twas the Ninth. Oh, the blood

Is choking his voice! What a look of despair!
There, lean on my knee, while I put back the hair
From eyes so fast glazing. Oh, my darling, my own,
My hands were both idle when you died alone.

He's dying—he's dead! Close his lids, let us go.
God's peace on his soul! If we only could know
Where our own dear one lies!—my soul has turned sick;
Must we crawl o'er these bodies that lie here so thick?
I cannot! I cannot! How eager you are!
One might think you were nursed on the red lap of War.

He's not here,—and not here. What wild hopes flash through
My thoughts, as foot-deep I stand in this dread dew,
And cast up a prayer to the blue, quiet sky!
Was it you, girl, that shrieked? Ah! what face doth lie
Upturned toward me there; so rigid and white?
O God, my brain reels! 'Tis a dream. My old sight

Is dimmed with these horrors. My son! oh, my son!
Would I had died for thee, my own, only one!
There lift off your arms; let him come to the breast
Where first he was lulled, with my soul's hymn, to rest.
Your heart never thrilled to your lover's fond kiss
As mine to his baby-touch; was it for this?

He was yours, too; he loved you? Yes, yes, you are right.
Forgive me, my daughter, I'm maddened to-night.
Don't moan so, dear child; you're young, and your years
May still hold fair hopes; but the old die of tears.

Yes, take him again;—ah! don't lay your face there;
See, the blood from his wound has stained your loose hair.

How quiet you are! Has she fainted?—her cheek
Is cold as his own. Say a word to me,—speak!
Am I crazed? Is she dead? Has *her* heart broke first?
Her trouble was bittter, but sure mine is worst.
I'm afraid, I'm afraid, all alone with these dead;
Those corpses are stirring; God help my poor head!

I'll sit by my children until the men come
To bury the others, and then we'll go home.
Why, the slain are all dancing! Dearest, don't move.
Keep away from my boy; he's guarded by love.
Lullaby, lullaby; sleep, sweet darling, sleep!
God and thy mother will watch o'er thee keep.

THE BRAKEMAN GOES TO CHURCH.

ON the road once more, with Lebanon fading away in the distance, the fat passenger drumming idly on the window pane, the cross passenger sound asleep, and the tall, thin passenger reading "Gen. Grant's Tour around The World," and wondering why "Green's August Flower" should be printed above the doors of a "Buddhist Temple at Benares." To me comes the brakeman, and, seating himself on the arm of the seat, says:

"I went to church yesterday."

"Yes," I said, with that interested inflection that asks for more: "And what church did you attend?"

"Which do you guess?" he asked.

"Some union mission church?" I hazarded.

"Naw," he said; "I don't like to run on these branch roads very much. I don't often go to church, and when I do, I want to run on the main line, where your run is regular and you go on schedule time, and don't have to wait on connections. I don't like to run on a branch. Good enough, but I don't like it."

"Episcopal?" I guessed.

"Limited express," he said, "all palace cars and $2 extra for a seat; fast time and only stop at the big stations. Nice line, but too exhaustive for a brakeman. All trainmen in uniform; conductor's punch and lantern silver-plated and no train-boys allowed. Then the passengers are allowed to talk back at the conductor, and it makes them too free and easy. No, I couldn't stand the palace car. Rich road, though. Don't often hear of a receiver being appointed for that line. Some mighty nice people travel on it, too."

"Universalist?" I suggested.

"Broad gauge," said the brakeman, "does too much complimentary business. Everybody travels on a pass. Conductor doesn't get a fare once in fifty miles. Stops at all flag stations, and won't run into anything but a union depot. No smoking car on the train. Train orders are rather vague, though, and the train men don't get along well with the passengers. No, I didn't go to the Universalist, though I know some awfully good men who run on that road."

"Presbyterian?" I asked.

"Narrow gauge, eh?" said the brakeman, "pretty track, straight as a rule; tunnel right through a mountain

rather than go around it; spirit-level grade; passengers have to show their tickets before they get on the train. Mighty strict road, but the cars are a little narrow; have to sit one in a seat and no room in the aisle to dance. Then there's no stop-over tickets allowed; got to go straight through to the station you're ticketed for, or you can't get on at all. When the car's full, no extra coaches; cars built at the shops to hold just so many, and nobody else allowed on. But you don't hear of an accident on that road; it's run right up to the rules."

"Maybe you joined the Free Thinkers?" I said.

"Scrub road," said the brakeman; "dirt road-bed, and no ballast; no time-card and no train dispatcher. All trains run wild, and every engineer makes his own time just as he pleases. Smoke if you want to; kind of go-as-you-please road. Too many side tracks, and every switch wide open all the time, with the switchman sound asleep, and the target-lamp dead out. Get on as you please, and get off when you want to. Don't have to show your tickets, and the conductor isn't expected to do anything but amuse the passengers. No, sir; I was offered a pass, but I don't like the line. I don't like to travel on a road that has no terminus. Do you know, sir, I asked a Division Superintendent where that road run to, and he said he hoped to die if he knew. I asked him if the General Superintendent could tell me, and he said he didn't believe they had a General Superintendent, and if they had, he didn't know anything more about the road than the passengers. I asked him who he reported to, and he said 'nobody.' I asked a conductor who he got his orders from, and he said he didn't take orders from any living man or dead ghost. And when I asked the engineer whom he got his orders

from, he said he'd like to see anybody give him orders; he'd run that train to suit himself, or he'd run it into the ditch. Now, you see, sir, I'm a railroad man, and I don't care to run on a road that has no time, makes no connections, runs nowhere, and has no Superintendent. It may be all right, but I've railroaded too long to understand it."

"Did you try the Methodist?" I said.

"Now you're shouting," he said with some enthusiasm. "Nice road, eh? Fast time and plenty of passengers. Engines carry a power of steam, and don't you forget it; steam-gauge shows 100, and enough all the time. Lively road; when the conductor shouts "All aboard!" you can hear him at the next station. Every train lamp shines like a headlight. Stop-over checks given on all through tickets; passenger can drop off the train as often as he likes, do the stations two or three days, and hop on the next revival train that comes thundering along. Good, whole-souled, companionable conductors; ain't any road in the country where the passengers feel more at home. No passes; every passenger pays full traffic rates for his ticket. Wesleyanhouse air-brakes on all trains, too; pretty safe road, but I didn't ride over it yesterday."

"Maybe you went to the Congregational church," I said.

"Popular road," said the brakeman; "an old road, too; one of the very oldest in the country. Good road-bed and comfortable cars. Well-managed road, too; Directors don't interfere with Division Superintendents and train orders. Road's mighty popular, but it's pretty independent, too. See, didn't one of the Division Superintendents down East discontinue one of the oldest stations on the line two or three years ago? But it's a mighty pleasant

road to travel on. Always has such a splendid class of passengers."

"Perhaps you tried the Baptist?" I guessed once more.

"Ah, ha!" said the brakeman, "she's a daisy, isn't she? River road; beautiful curves; sweep around anything to keep close to the river, but it's all steel-rail and rock ballast, single track all the way and not a side track from the round-house to the terminus. Takes a heap of water to run it, though; double tanks at every station, and there isn't an engine in the shops that can pull a pound or run a mile with less than two gauges. But it runs through a lovely country—these river roads always do; river on one side and hills on the other, and its a steady climb up the grade all the way till the run ends where the fountain-head of the river begins. Yes, sir, I'll take the river road every time for a lovely trip, sure connections and a good time, and no prairie dust blowing in at the windows. And yesterday, when the conductor came round for the tickets with a little basket punch, I didn't ask him to pass me, but I paid my fare like a little man—25 cents for an hour's run, and a little concert by the passengers throwed in. I tell you, Pilgrim, you take the river road when you want——"

But just here the long whistle from the engine announced a station, and the brakeman hurried to the door, shouting:

"Zionsville! This train makes no stops between here and Indianapolis!"

HOW MICKEY GOT KILT IN THE WAR.

A pinsion-claim agent! Will, then, sor,
You're the mon that I'm wanting to see!
I've a claim for a pinsion that's due me,
And I want yez to get it for me.

Will, no! sor, I never was wounded,
For the fact is I didn't inlist;
Though I would have been off to the army,
Had I not had a boil on me fist.

But me b'y, me poor Mickey, was kilt, sor;
An', when poets the story shall tell,
Sure, the counthry will then be erectin'
A monument there where he fell.

He was not cut in two wid a sabre,
Nor struck wid a big cannon ball;
But he lepped from a four-story windy,
An', bedad! he got kilt in the fall.

Yis, it was a rash le'p to be making;
But, in faith, thin, he had to, I'm sure;
For he heard them a-shlamming an' banging,
An' a thrying to break in the dure,

They were going to capture poor Mickey;
An' to kape from their clutches, poor b'y,
He had to le'p out of the windy,
An', indeed, it was four stories high.

No, it was not the fall, sor, that kilt him;
It was stopping so sudden, you see,
Whin he got to the bottom it jarred him,
An' that kilt him as dead as could be.

Och! he loved the owld flag, did brave Mickey,
An' he died for his counthry, although
He was not killed in battle exactly;
He was lepping the bounties, you know.

'Twas the marshal was after him—yis, sor;
An', in fact, he was right at the dure,
When he made the le'p out of the windy,
An' he never lepped bounties no more.

So, av course, I'm intitled to a pinsion
An' the owld woman, too, is, because
We were both, sor, depindent on Micky,
The darlin', brave b'y that he was.

Av course, ye'll not 'av any trouble,
So go on wid yez now, sor, an' fill
Out a lot of thim blank affidavits,
An' I'll swear to thim all, so I will.

It's swate, yis, to die for wan's counthry;
But, bedad! I can't help but abhor
Thim battles where people got hurted,
Since Mickey got kilt in the war.

OLD FARMER GRAY GETS PHOTOGRAPHED.

I WANT you to take a picter o' me and my old woman here,
Jest as we be, if you please, sir,—wrinkles, gray hairs, and all;
We never was vain at our best, and we're going on eighty year,
But we've got some boys to be proud of,—straight, an' handsome, and tall.

They are coming home this summer, the nineteenth day of July,
Tom wrote me (Tom's a lawyer in Boston, since forty-eight);
So we're going to try and surprise em, my old wife and I,—
Tom, Harry, Zay, and Elisha, and the two girls, Jennie and Kate.

I guess you've hearn of Elisha; he preaches in Middletown.
I'm a Methody, myself, but he's 'Piscopal, he says.
Don't s'pose it makes much difference, only he wears a gown;
An' I couldn't abide (bein' old and set) what *I* call them Popish ways;

But he's good, for *I* brought him up; and the others—Harry 'n' Zay,—
They're merchants down to the city, an' don't forget mother 'n' me.
They'd give us the fat of the land, if we'd only come that way.
And Jennie and Kate are hearty off, for they married rich, you see.

Well, lud, that's a cur'us fix, sir! Do you screw it into the head?
I've hearn o' this photography, and I reckon its scary work.
Do you take the picters by lightin'?—La, yes; so the neighbors said:
It's the sun that does it, old woman; 'n' he never was known to shirk.

Wall, yes, I'll be readin' the Bible: old woman, what'll you do?
Jest sit on the other side 'o me, 'n' I'll take hold 'o your hand.
That's the way we courted, mister, if it's all the same to you;
And that's the way we're goin', please God, to the light o' the better land.

I never could look that thing in the face, if my eyes was as good as gold.
'Taint over? Do say! What, the work is done? Old woman, that beats the Dutch.
Jest think! we've got our picters took; and we nigh eighty year old:
There ain't many couples in our town, of our age, that can say as much.

You see, on the nineteenth of next July our Golden Wedding comes on,—
For fifty year in the sun and rain we've pulled at the same old cart;

We've never had any trouble to speak of, only our poor son John
Went wrong, an' I drove him off; 'n' it about broke the old woman's heart.

There's a drop of bitter in every sweet. And my old woman and me
Will think of John when the rest come home. Would I forgive him, young sir?
He was only a boy; and I was a fool for bein' so hard, you see:
If I could jist git him atween these arms, I'd stick to him like a burr.

And what's to pay for the sunshine that's painted my gray old phiz?
Nothin'! That's cur'us! You don't work for the pleasure of working, hey?
Old woman, look here! there's Tom in that face—I'm blest if the chin isn't his!—
Good God! *she* knows him—It's our son John, the boy that we drove away.

A DESERTER.

"DESERTER!" Well, Captain, the word's about right,
And its uncommon queer I should run from a fight,
Or the chance of a fight; I, raised in a land
Where boys, you may say, are born rifle in hand,
And who've fought all my life for the right of my ranch,
With the wily Apache and the cruel Comanche.

But it's true, and I'll own it, I did run away.
"Drunk?" No, sir; I'd not tasted a drop all day;
But—smile if you will—I'd a dream in the night,
And I woke in a fever of sorrow and fright
And went for my horse; 'twas up and away;
And I rode like the wind, till the break of the day.

"What was it I dreamt?" I dreamed of my wife—
The true little woman that's better than life—
I dreamt of my boys—I have three—one is ten,
The youngest is four—all brave little men—
Of my one baby girl, my pretty white dove,
The star of my home, the rose of its love.

I saw the log house on the clear San Antoine,
And I knew that around it the grass had been mown,
For I felt in my dream, the sweet breath of the hay,
I was there, for I lifted a jessamine spray;
And the dog that I loved heard my whispered command,
And whimpered and put his big head in my hand.

The place was so still; all the boys were at rest;
And the mother lay dreaming, the babe at her breast.
I saw the fair scene for a moment; then stood
In a circle of flame, amid shrieking and blood.
The Comanche had the place—Captain spare me the rest;
You know what that means, for you come from the West.

I woke with a shout, and I had but one aim—
To save or revenge them—my head was aflame,

And my heart had stood still; I was mad, I dare say,
For my horse fell dead at the dawn of the day;
Then I knew what I'd done, and with heart-broken
breath,
When the boys found me out, I was praying for death.

"A pardon?" No, Captain, I did run away,
And the wrong to the flag it is right I should pay
With my life. It's not hard to be brave
When one's children and wife have gone to the grave.
Boys, take a good aim! When I turn to the west
Put a ball through my heart; it's kindest and best.

* * * * * * * * *

He lifted his hat to the flag—bent his head,
And the prayer of his childhood solemnly said—
Shouted, "Comrades, adieu!"—spread his arms to the
west—
And a rifle ball instantly granted him rest,
But o'er that sad grave by the Mexican sea,
Wives and mothers have planted a blossoming tree,
And maidens bring roses, and tenderly say:
"It was love—sweetest love—led the soldier away."

LITTLE GRAVES.

THE winds stir idly by this knoll of bloom. How faintly the golden daisies scent the warm air coming up from silent dells and deep, still waters. Here a tender creeping vine, next a slim, white lily; two roses, gold and salmon, a cluster of heart's-ease, the border forget-me-nots, delicate myosotis, and beyond is myrtle, done blossoming, about

the marble crosses. Is there not a strange, sad comfort in planting and tear-watering such sweetness above little graves? Always when you drop the spade mutely, imagining it a profanation of the place, and, kneeling down, you, with your hands, turn the warm earth back, as with your own hands you'd ever turn and smooth the cradle coverlets at the wee one's bedtime—always then, come back the old and oft-remembered fancies! Two little green and bloomy mounds! Here lies the boy, and here the tinier girl: Edmond and Eloise—Eddie and Elsie. This little fellow that slumbers here was greater in your mind than monarch or poet. You recall naught but beauty, and the bravery and manliness of his five years' sojourn with you. There are no little stings of his ill-conduct—perhaps you were not always as gentle as he deserved! Ah, no, 'tis only a passing fancy. You lived so much in his anticipated future; his education was already begun, a home education; even his profession prospected and conversed upon. You felt so safe and sure of him; now, you wonder how a moment could have been spent at ease away from the little man; then, you could leave him hours at a time, if it so happened. He had toys and pretty books; how proud you were, you and his father both, that this little "General" (as his uncle dubbed him) should read as he did, at four years old! You never urged him on; he sped swiftly ahead, gaining knowledge; his uncle almost wished to restrain him, saying it seemed perilous. You laughed at brother Charles; you felt so safe and sure of Eddie. Ay! until the time came. No wonder if you seemed stunned. Why, you stood all day long in one place there in the parlor with the windows open, the cur-

tain fluttering in the soft summer breeze. Then you went out stealthily through the great hall door to the porch that you might know for yourself if it were true or false; to feel no soft white streamers on the bell-knob, and so be assured it was not true. Alas! *they were there!* A white ague shook you, and shone in your face; then you, returning, stood in the hall alone, with the sunshine filtered by the green stained glass above the door, ghastly on your face; stood holding out your aching hands in the pallor of that light, repeating aloud over their ghastly hue, "Am I not dead? Am I not dead?" After the funeral, you had odd ways and notions; you were constantly frightened about the year-old baby; she seemed too fragile to keep longer with you. In the night you lay awake and suffered, even when she was not ill, but fresh and ruddy; terrible dreams besieged you, an awful desire to save her crowded constantly upon your brain; and so worn for weeks, you at last gave way to a low, contagious fever, raving day and night about death and your babies; both were alive to you, and both in danger; your hot hands clinched the air, you tossed in a fever spasm. After awhile came calm sleep, convalescence, finally recovery. The first words upon your lips were that your baby might be brought you; kept so long from your arms, the baby for whose kisses and lispings you were starving. They deceived you; they said it would not yet be safe. They deceived you, they could not bring your baby, she lay asleep "under the daisies" by little Eddie! They could not tell you this until you were stronger; too strong to swoon or fall back in relapse and die. They waited until you were strong enough to hear the news, broken by the most loving—the baby's

father—till you were just strong enough to shriek at them all for letting your baby die, not *you;* for letting the little dimpled face slip out of your sight forever, and the tiny hands and lips for whose touch you were so hungry; to shriek that they could have kept her from the contagion, could have sent her away; to shriek until your husband, pale-faced, newly gray-haired with trouble, struck hand to brow, and rushed desperately out, crying: "My God! I cannot stand it!" Then you stopped; you had scarcely thought of him before; all his suffering, care and sorrow. You thought at last of duty, your duty to him, and you wept softly, yet with passion. After this you began to comfort him, and the sorrow grew less poignant.

In the autumn you dressed the little mounds yourself, for the first time, with the most beautiful leaves, and late blossoms. Hours you sat, silently watching the place where the little ones slumbered. Yonder the flaming asters grew, and here the mild blue gentians. On this hillock you heard the waters murmur dreamily through the after day. Then you arose, and softly sought your home. It is summer again; you wondered late in November, how you could ever endure the snow, the cold snow on those little graves; but when it really fell, flake after flake, you forgot the coldness in its mild and gentle purity; and so winter came and went. Sunset now; you gather up your garden tools to come away; then kneeling once more you lay a tender hand caressingly on either mound—on one little cross and on the other—"Eddie, Elsie, good-bye, my precious babies!" So many little graves in the world! So many hopes and ambitions smothered and laid away; always remembered as what you had vainly dreamed of,

but now have wholly relinquished to a hill-side, hedged about with golden daisies, to the bright sunshine, the silence, and to God's will.

"DEAD! NAME UNKNOWN."

"SOME charity, for Christ's sake!" At the door
Of princely mansion, timidly she stood;
Her scanty garments scarce concealed her poor
And shivering form. "Kind sir, a little food!
I have a dying child—no fire, no wood!
'Tis hard to beg, but ah! I cannot see
Her suffer; for she worked long as she could;
Some charity for Christ's sake! Let it be
Alone bestowed on her; think not of me."

"Begone, I say! How dare you enter here?
For Christ's Sake! Bah! that *is* a tale, indeed!
How chilly! *Ugh*! I shall be sick, I fear—
Jane, shut the door; and after this take heed,
Pay no attention to such folks in need;
Disturb me not beside my blazing grate,
With calls like this, to hear a beggar plead—
True, there's the theater! 'Tis almost eight;
Come, Julia dear, I fear we shall be late."

The curtain rose. It was "The Beggar Girl
Of Warsaw." Ne'er had acting seemed so well;
Scene after scene, that made the lip to curl
In scorn, or sentimental sigh to swell,
Or tear to fall, held as with magic spell

The breathless hundreds; and when plaintive cry—
"Some charity for Christ's sake!"—thrilling—fell,
It seemed an echo coming from the sky,
To which the actress raised her pleading eye.

Absorbed in the romance, a millionaire
Sat in his private box with lordly mien,
While by his side there sat a lady fair
And fascinating, jeweled like a queen—
'Twas plain they sat so that they might be seen;
From fiction's fancied woes what would they learn?
'Tis he, the same we saw at early e'en!
What pleasure in the *false* can those discern
Who heartlessly from *real* sufferings turn?

The play went on. Great city scenes were so
Portrayed in grim midwinter night, they seemed
As real; bleak, deserted streets; the glow
Of countless lamps, that on the vision beamed
So cold, and in the wildering distance gleamed
Like stars; palatial homes, from which the sound
Of music floated out and radiance streamed;
While o'er the way, in icy slumbers bound,
Some frozen wretch at early morn was found.

The proud man turned to find fair Julia's face
Just then concealed with dainty, jeweled hand,
That pressed a snowy bank of costly lace
Close to her swimming eyes. "That acting's grand,"
Said he, "more elevating than to stand
With beggar face to face. 'Tis strange, somehow,
That woman used those same expressions, and
They seem to haunt me—why should I allow
Such fancies? Come, the play is ended now.

"'Tis well we only have a square to go,
These heavy furs just suit such bitter night--
Look here, my boy, pray tell me if you know
The meaning of that crowd upon the right,
Just passing there within that crimson light
From yonder window?" "Oh, sir, they have caught
A thief; and she's in such a dreadful fright!
She stole a loaf of bread, sir! Like as not
She'll go to jail!" The answer was—"She ought."

"*Just come along*!" 'Twas a policeman spoke–
"I've heard that tale more than a hundred times;
So hungry—sick—at home—Well, that's a joke!
Who can be hungry with the Christmas chimes
Proclaiming plenty all around them? Crimes
Are serious things, good woman. *Help*, you say?
No help for you unless you have the *dimes*;
The hungry wretch who steals a loaf, to-day,
Is caught. The wealthy thief is helped away."

The Court is called. Forth from their grated cells,
The prisoners are brought for hearing dread,
While each patrolman in rotation tells
His tale. The last indictment that was read
Told how a woman stole a loaf of bread;
"Where is she?" asked the Court in hasty tone;
The watch replied—"Your honor, *she is dead!*"
Last night, I locked her in a cell alone,
And she was dead this morning—*name unknown.*"

"Have morning paper, sir? It tells you all
About the frozen girl;" the newsboy cried;

"Death in the lockup—all about the ball
Last night; tells how some feasted, how some died;
And when the great defaulter will be tried;
Two cents, sir." "So that woman's tale was true
For once," the great man coldly said aside;
"'Tis well; I'm glad *my* act is out of view—
Both dead! What would the world say, if it knew?"

What can this false sensation do for man,
In splendid theaters applauded deep
By fashion's throng, who comfortably scan
Fictitious wretches starve and freeze and weep—
Price—fifty cents? Such charity is cheap!
True, like our millionaire, some choose to pay
Much greater prices, mostly done to keep
Above the common herd. So goes the play—
Cheap tears at night and icy hearts all day!

TOM.

YES, Tom's the best fellow that ever you knew.
Just listen to this:
When the old mill took fire, and the flooring fell through,
And I with it, helpless there, full in my view
What do you think my eyes saw through the fire,
That crept along, crept along, nigher and nigher,
But Robin, my baby-boy, laughing to see
The shining? He must have come there after me,
Toddled along from the cottage without

Any one's missing him. Then, what a shout—
Oh! how I shouted, "For Heaven's sake, men,
Save little Robin!" Again and again
They tried, but the fire held them back like a wall.
I could hear them go at it, and at it, and call,
"Never mind, baby, sit still like a man!
We're coming to get you as fast as we can."
They could not see him, but I could. He sat
Still on a beam, his little straw hat
Carefully placed by his side; and his eyes

Stared at the flame with a baby's surprise,
Calm and unconscious, as nearer it crept.
The roar of the fire up above must have kept
The sound of his mother's voice shrieking his name
From reaching the child. But I heard it. It came
Again and again. O God, what a cry!
The axes went faster: I saw the sparks fly
Where the men worked like tigers, nor minded the heat
That scorched them,—when, suddenly, there at their feet,

The great beams leaned in—they saw him—then, crash,
Down came the wall! The men made a dash,—
Jumped to get out of the way,—and I thought,
"All's up with poor little Robin!" and brought
Slowly the arm that was least hurt to hide
The sight of the child there,—when swift at my side,

Some one rushed by, and went right through the
flame,
Straight as a dart—caught the child—and then came
Back with him, choking and crying, but—saved!
Saved safe and sound!

Oh, how the men raved,
Shouted, and cried, and hurrahed! Then they all
Rushed at the work again, lest the back wall,
Where I was lying, away from the fire,
Should fall in and bury me.

Oh! you'd admire
To see Robin now; he's as bright as a dime,
Deep in some mischief, too, most of the time.
Tom, it was, saved him. Now, isn't it true
Tom's the best fellow that ever you knew?
There's Robin now! See, he's as strong as a log!
And there comes Tom, too—
Yes, Tom is our dog.

JUSTICE IN LEADVILLE.

YES, law is a great thing, mister, but justice comes in
ahead
When a lie makes a fiend not guilty, and the neighbor he
shot is dead.
Leadville would follow the fashion, have regular courts of
law;
I take no stock in lawyers, don't gamble upon their jaw.

But the judge, he said Gueldo undoubtedly did for Blake,
And he ought to give him a trial just for appearance' sake;
That Texas chap can't clear him, the lead's too rich to hide,
And the black neck of the Spaniard on the air-line's bound to ride.
So I tried to believe in the woman "with the bandage upon her eyes,"
Though one side's as likely as t'other to drop from the beam, or rise
If a nugget should tip the balance or a false tongue cry the weight;
But I thought I'd see if a trial was "the regular thing" for Kate;
So I went to her pretty cottage; the widow's a tidy thing,
Great mournful eyes, and a head of hair as brown as a heron's wing.
Her husband's murder was cruel; Antonio, fierce and sly,
Had sworn revenge for a trifle when some of the boys were nigh.
She had tripped to her bed of pansies, for Blake was going away;
While he bent to embrace their baby she gathered a love bouquet;
She heard a voice—Gueldo's—a shot—and she ran to Jim;
But the babe's white dress was scarlet, and the father's eyes were dim.
You've heard the cry of a bittern?—it was just that sort of a noise;
It brought us there in a hurry, the women and half the boys.

She tried to tell us the story, her white lips only stirred;
She seemed to slip quite out of life, and couldn't utter a word.
She told us at last in writing, only a name,—and then
Six derringers found his level, his guard was a dozen men.
She didn't take on, seemed frozen,—but Lord! what a ghastly face!
With slow, sad steps, like the shade of joy, she crept round the woful place,
And when we lifted the coffin she knelt with her little child,
Just whispered to Jim and kissed him; we said, "She is going wild."
Ah, deep things yield no token, and she wa'n't surface gold;
'Twas a gloomy job prospecting 'round a claim Jim couldn't hold,
But I found her rocking the baby, her chin in the dainty palm,
White as the shaver's pillow, tearless and dreadful calm.
I told her about the trial; she shuddered, her great black eyes
Flashed out such a danger signal,—or may be it was surprise.
"They never can clear Gueldo; he cannot escape, for I
Can swear to his hissing Spanish,—that I saw him turn and fly!"
"No, never." I said, "His ticket is good for the underground,
He's due this time to-morrow where he won't find Blake around."

The judge held court in the wood-house, and Bagget had stripped his store
Of barrel and box; I never set eyes on such a crowd before.
I dropped on a keg of ciscos, the judge on a box of soap;
Gueldo and his attorney found seats on a coil of rope.
Then Kate came, with her baby like a rosebud in the snow,
Its pink cheek 'gainst the mother's, pallid and pinched with woe.
Jim's blue eyes, as I live, sir! there were his very curls;
They set us miners to sobbing like a corral of silly girls.
She looked so thankful on us, colored, and when she met
The snake eyes of Gueldo, the braids on her brow were wet;
And if the hell of the preachers had yawned on our gentle Kate,
She couldn't have glared such horror or woman's deadly hate.
So they went on with the trial; an alibi, it was claimed,
Would be urged for the wolf defendant; the judge—well, he looked ashamed
When ten of the hardest rascals, the cruelest, meanest lot,
Swore, black and blue, Gueldo was four miles from the spot
With them a-hunting the grizzly; then the Texan plead his case,
Till the judge turned pale as ashes, couldn't look in an honest face.
"Your verdict, my men of the jury, must be grounded, I suppose,
On the weight of the testimony; if you have any faith in those

Reliable fellows from Gouger; the prisoner wasn't thar."
And his honor growled upon him like a vexed and hungry b'ar.
I've noticed the newest convert prays loudest of all the camp,
And that mutton-headed jury declared for the cussed scamp.
For nothing Kate's truthful story; the evidence went, you see,
To disprove the facts; Gueldo by the law was acquitted free.
"You can go," said the judge, "but likely the climate won't suit you here."
Antonio rose defiant, then Kate spoke low and clear
(Clasping her babe and rising): "Are you done with the prisoner, sir?"
As a marble statue might ask it. His honor bowed to her.
"Heaven knows I'm sorry; I am, child." "because," she replied, "I'm not."
A flash from her eyes and pistol—the Mexican devil was shot.
The smoke made a little halo 'round the laughing baby's head,
Then I knew the terrible promise she whispered her hus- husband, dead.
Gueldo staggered, falling, his swart face scared and grim,
Dead, gentlemen of the jury! Decision reversed for him!
"And justice?" we heard her murmur, though she wasn't the talking kind,
And she hadn't the least allusion to that female pictured blind.

Trembling she turned upon us the eyes of a wounded doe;
"Amen!" from the weeping neighbors; "God help you,"
the judge said; "go!"

THE DEAD DOLL.

YOU needn't be trying to comfort me — I tell you my
dolly is dead!
There's no use in saying she isn't with a crack like that in
her head;
It's just like you said it wouldn't hurt much to have my
tooth out, that day,
And then, when the man 'most pulled my head off, you
hadn't a word to say.

And I guess you must think I'm a baby, when you say you
can mend it with glue,
As if I didn't know better than that! Why, just suppose
it was you;
You might make her look all mended—but what do I care
for looks?
Why, glue's for chairs and tables, and toys and the backs
of books!

My dolly! My own little daughter! Oh, but it's the
awfulest crack!
It just makes me sick to think of the sound when her poor
head went whack
Against that horrible brass thing that holds up the little
shelf.
Now, nursey, what makes you remind me? I know that I
did it myself.

I think you must be crazy—you'll get her another head!
What good would forty heads do her? I tell you my dolly is dead!
And to think I hadn't quite finished her elegant new spring hat!
And I took a sweet ribbon of hers last night to tie on that horrid cat!

When my mamma gave me that ribbon — I was playing out in the yard —
She said to me, most expressly, "Here's a ribbon for Hildegarde."
And I went and put it on Tabby, and Hildegarde saw me do it;
But I said to myself, "Oh, never mind, I don't believe she knew it."

But I know that she knew it now, and I just believe, I do,
That her poor little heart was broken, and so her head broke too.
Oh, my baby! My little baby! I wish my head had been hit!
For I've hit it over and over, and it hasn't cracked a bit.

But since the darling is dead, she'll want to be buried, of course;
We will take my little wagon, nurse, and you shall be the horse;
And I'll walk behind and cry; and we'll put her in this, you see—
This dear little box—and we'll bury her there out under the maple tree.

And papa will make me a tombstone, like the one he made
for my bird;
And he'll put what I tell him on it — yes, every single
word!
I shall say, "Here lies Hildegarde, a beautiful doll who
is dead:
She died of a broken heart, and a dreadful crack in her
head."

CHRIST AND THE LITTLE ONES.

"THE Master has come over Jordan,"
Said Hannah, the mother, one day;
"He is healing the people who throng Him,
With a touch of His finger, they say.

"And now I shall carry the children,
Little Rachel, and Samuel, and John;
I shall carry the baby Esther
For the Lord to look upon."

The father looked at her kindly,
But he shook his head and smiled;
"Now who but a doting mother
Would think of a thing so wild?

"If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever, 'twere well;
Or had they the taint of the leper,
Like many in Israel."

"Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan,
I feel such a burden of care;
If I carry it to the Master,
Perhaps I shall leave it there.

"If He lay His hand on the children,
My heart will beat lighter, I know;
For a blessing for ever and ever
Will follow them as they go."

So over the hills of Judah,
Along the vine rows green,
With Esther asleep on her bosom,
And Rachel her brothers, between—

'Mong the people who hang on His teaching,
Or waiting His touch or His word,
Through the row of proud Pharisees, listening,
She pressed to the feet of her Lord.

"Now, why shouldst thou hinder the Master,"
Said Peter, "with children like these?"
Seest not how from morning to evening
He teacheth, and healeth disease?"

Then Christ said, "Forbid not the children!
Permit them to come unto me."
And he took in his arms little Esther,
And Rachel He set on His knee.

And the heavy heart of the mother
Was lifted all earth-care above,
As He laid His hands on the brothers
And blessed them with tenderest love:

As He said of the babes in His bosom,
"Of such is the kingdon of heaven."
And strength for all duty and trial,
That hour to her spirit was given!

HANNAH BINDING SHOES.

POOR lone Hannah,
Sitting at the window, binding shoes!
Faded, wrinkled,
Sitting, stitching, in a mournful muse.
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,
When the bloom was on the tree;—
Spring and winter,
Hannah's at the window binding shoes.

Not a neighbor
Passing, nod or answer will refuse
To her whisper:
"Is there from the fishers any news?"
Oh, her heart's adrift with one
On an endless voyage gone;—
Night and morning,
Hannah's at the window binding shoes,

Fair young Hannah,
Ben, the sunburnt fisher, gaily wooes;
Hale and clever,
For a willing heart and hand he sues.
May-day skies are all aglow,
And the waves are laughing so!
For her wedding
Hannah leaves her window and her shoes.

May is passing;
'Mid the apple-boughs a pigeon cooes;
Hannah shudders,
For the mild southwester mischief brews.
Round the rocks of Marblehead,
Outward bound, a schooner sped;
Silent, lonesome,
Hannah's at the window binding shoes.

'Tis November:
Now no tear her wasted cheek bedews,
From Newfoundland
Not a sail returning will she lose,
Whispering, hoarsely, "Fishermen,
Have you—have you heard of Ben?"
Old with watching,
Hannah's at the window binding shoes.

Twenty winters
Bleach and drear the ragged shores she views,
Twenty seasons,
Never one has brought her any news.
Still her dim eyes silently
Chase the white sails o'er the sea;—
Hopeless, faithful,
Hannah's at the window binding shoes.

TOM'S LITTLE STAR.

SWEET Mary, pledged to Tom, was fair
And graceful, young and slim.
Tom loved her truly, and one dare
Be sworn that she loved him;

For, twisting bashfully the ring
That sealed the happy fiat,
She cooed, "When married in the spring,
Dear Tom, let's live *so* quiet!

"Let's have our pleasant little place,
Our books, a friend or two;
No noise, no crowd, but just your face
For me, and mine for you.
Won't that be nice?" "It is my own
Idea," said Tom, "so chary,
So deep and true, my love has grown,
I worship you, my Mary."

She was a tender, nestling thing,
A girl that loved her home,
A sort of dove with folded wing,
A bird not made to roam,
But gently rest her little claw
(The simile to carry)
Within a husband's stronger paw—
The very girl to marry.

Their courtship was a summer sea,
So smooth, so bright, so calm,
Till one day Mary restlessly
Endured Tom's circling arm,
And looked as if she thought or planned;
Her satin forehead wrinkled,
She beat a tattoo on his hand,
Her eyes were strange, and twinkled.

She never heard Tom's fond remarks,
His "sweety-tweety dear,"
Or noticed once the little larks
He played to make her hear.
"What ails," he begged, "my petsy pet?
What ails my love, I wonder?"
"Do not be trifling, Tom; I've met
Professor Shakespeare Thunder."

Thunder!" said Tom, "and who is he?"
"You goose, why don't you know?"
'I don't. She never frowned at me,
Or called me 'goose.' And though,"
Thought Tom, "it may be playfulness,
It racks my constitution."
'Why, Thunder teaches with success
Dramatic elocution."

'Oh! Ah! Indeed! and what is that?
My notion is but faint."
"It's art," said Mary, brisk and pat.
Tom thought that "art" meant paint.
'You blundering boy! why art is just
What makes one stare and wonder.
To understand high art you must
Hear Shakespeare read by Thunder."

Tom started at the turn of phrase;
It sounded like a swear.
Then Mary said, to his amaze,
With nasal groan and glare,

"'To be or—r—not to be?'" And fain
To act discreet, yet gallant,
He asked, "Dear, have you any—pain?"
"Oh, no, Tom; I have talent.

"Professor Thunder told me so;
He sees it in my eye;
He says my tones and gestures show
My destiny is high."
Said Tom, for Mary's health afraid,
His ignorance revealing,
"Is talent, dear, that noise you made?"
"Why, no; that's Hamlet's feeling."

"He must have felt most dreadful bad."
"The character is mystic,"
Mary explained, "and very sad,
And very high artistic.
And you are not; you're commonplace;
These things are far above you."
"I'm only," spoke Tom's honest face,
"Artist enough—to love you."

From that time forth was Mary changed;
Her eyes stretched open wide;
Her smooth fair hair in friz arranged
And parted on the side.
More and more strange she grew, and quite
Incapable of taking
The slightest notice how each night
She set Tom's poor heart aching.

As once he left her at the door,
"A thousand times good night,"
Sighed Mary, sweet as ne'er before.
Poor Tom revived, looked bright.
"Mary," he said, "you love me so?
We have not grown asunder?"
"Do not be silly, Tom; you know
I'm studying with Thunder.

"That's from the famous Juliet scene.
I'll do another bit."
Quoth Tom: "I don't know what you mean."
"Then listen; this is it:
'Dear love, adieu.
Anon, good nurse. Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again.'
Now, Tom, say 'Blessed, blessed night!'"
Said Tom, with hesitation,
"B—blessed night." "Pshaw! that's not right;
You've no appreciation."

At Tom's next call he heard up stairs
A laugh most loud and coarse;
Then Mary, knocking down the chairs,
Came prancing like a horse.
"'Ha! ha! ha! Well, Governor, how are
Ye? I've been down five times, climbing up
Your stairs in my long clothes.'
That's comedy," she said. "You're mad,"
Said Tom. "'Mad!' Ha! Ophelia!
'They bore him bare faced on his bier,
And on his grave rained many a tear,'"

She chanted, very wild and sad;
Then whisked off on Emilia:
"'You told a lie—an odious, damnèd lie.
Upon my soul, a lie—a wicked lie.'"

She glared and howled two murder scenes,
And mouthed a new French rôle,
Where luckily the graceful miens
Hid the disgraceful soul.
She wept, she danced, she sang, she swore—
From Shakespeare—classic swearing;
A wild, abstracted look she wore,
And round the room went tearing.

And every word and every pause
Made Mary "quote a speech."
If Tom was sad (and he had cause),
She'd say, in sobbing screech,
"'Clifford, why don't you speak to me?'"
At flowers for a present
She leered, and sang coquettishly,
"'When daisies pied and violets blue,'"
Tom blurted, "That's not pleasant."

But Mary took offense at this,
"You have no soul" said she,
"For art, and do not know the bliss
Of notoriety.
The 'sacred' fire they talk about
Lights all the way before me;
It's quite my duty to 'come out,'
And all my friends implore me.

"Three months of Thunder I have found
A thorough course," she said;
"I'll clear Parnassus with a bound."
(Tom softly shook his head.)
"I cannot fail to be the rage"
(Tom looked a thousand pities),
"And so I'm going on the stage
To star in western cities."

And Mary went; but Mary came
To grief within a week,
And in a month she came to Tom,
Quite gentle, sweet, and meek.
Tom was rejoiced; his heart was none
The hardest or the sternest.
"Oh, Tom," she sobbed, "It looked like fun,
But art is dreadful earnest.

"Why, art means work, and slave, and bear
All sorts of scandal too;
To dread the critics so you dare
Not look a paper through;
Oh, 'art is long' and hard." "And you
Are short and soft, my darling."
"My money, Tom, is gone—*it* flew."
"That's natural with a starling."

"I love you more that words can say,
Dear Tom." He gave a start.
"Mary, is that from any play?"
"No, Tom; it's from my heart."

He took the tired, sunny head,
With all its spent ambitions,
So gently to his breast, she said
No word but sweet permissions.

"Can you forgive me, Tom, for——" "Life,"
He finished out the phrase.
"My love, you're patterned for a wife.
The crowded public ways
Are hard for even the strongest heart;
Yours beats too softly human.
However woman choose her art,
Yet art must choose its woman."

NO SECTS IN HEAVEN.

TALKING of sects, quite late one eve,
What one another of saints believe,
That night I stood in a troubled dream
By the side of a darkly-flowing stream.

And a "churchman" down to the river came,
When I heard a strange voice call his name,
"Good Father, stop; when you cross this tide
You must leave your robes on the other side."

But the aged father did not mind,
And his long gown floated out behind
As down to the stream his way he took,
His hands firm hold of a gilt-edged book.

"I'm bound for Heaven, and when I'm there
I shall want my book of Common Prayer,
And though I put on a starry crown,
I should feel quite lost without my gown."

Then he fixed his eye on the shining track,
But his gown was heavy and held him back
And the poor old father tried in vain,
A single step in the flood to gain.

I saw him again on the other side,
But his silk gown floated on the tide,
And no one asked, in that blissful spot
If he belonged to "the church" or not.

Then down to the river a Quaker strayed;
His dress of a sober hue was made,
"My hat and coat must be all of gray,
I cannot go any other way."

Then he buttoned his coat straight up to his chin
And staidly, solemnly, waded in,
And his broad-brimmed hat he pulled down tight
Over his forehead, so cold and white.

But a strong wind carried away his hat,
And he sighed a few moments over that,
And then, as he gazed to the farther shore
The coat slipped off and was seen no more.

Poor, dying Quaker, thy suit of gray
Is quietly sailing—away—away,
But thou'lt go to heaven, as straight as an arrow,
Whether thy brim be broad or narrow.

Next came Dr. Watts with a bundle of psalms
Tied nicely up in his aged arms.
And hymns as many, a very wise thing,
That the people in heaven, "all round" might sing.

But I thought that he heaved an anxious sigh,
As he saw that the river ran broad and high,
And looked rather surprised, as one by one,
The psalms, and hyms in the wave went down.

And after him with his *MSS.*
Came Wesley, the pattern of godliness;
But he cried, "Dear me, what shall I do ?
The water has soaked them through and through."

And there, on the river, far and wide,
Away they went on the swollen tide,
And the saint, astonished, passed through alone,
Without his manuscripts, up to the throne.

Then gravely walking, two saints by name,
Down to the stream together came,
But as they stopped at the river's brink,
I saw one saint from the other shrink,

"Sprinkled or plunged—may I ask you, friend,
How you attained to life's great end?"
"*Thus*, with a few drops on my brow";
"But I have been *dipped*, as you'll see me now.

"And I really think it will hardly do,
As I'm 'close communion,' to cross with you.
You're bound, I know, to the realms of bliss,
But you must go that way, and I'll go this."

And straightway plunging with all his might,
Away to the left—his friend at the right,
Apart they went from this world of sin;
But how did the brethren "enter in?"

And now where the river was rolling on,
A Presbyterian church went down;
Of women there seemed an innumerable throng,
But the men I could count as they passed along.

And concerning the road they could never agree,
The *old* or the *new* way, which it could be;
Nor ever a moment paused to think
That both would lead to the river's brink.

And a sound of murmuring long and loud
Came ever up from the moving crowd,
"You're in the old way, and I'm in the new,
That is the false, and this is the true."

Or, "I'm in the old way, and you're in the new,
That is the false, and *this* is the true."
But the brethren only seemed to speak,
Modest the sisters walked, and meek,

And if ever one of them chanced to say
What troubles she met with on the way,
How she longed to pass to the other side,
Nor feared to cross over the swelling tide,

A voice arose from the brethren then,
"Let no one speak but the 'holy men,'
For have ye not heard the words of Paul?
'Oh let the women keep silence, all.'"

I watched them long in my curious dream,
Till they stood by the border of the stream,
Then, just as I thought, the two ways met,
But all the brethren were talking yet,

And would talk on, till the heaving tide
Carried them over, side by side;
Side by side, for the way was one,
The toilsome journey of life was done,

And priest and Quaker, and all who died,
Came out alike on the other side;
No forms or crosses, or books had they,
No gowns of silk, or suits of gray,
No creeds to guide them, or *MSS.*,
For all had put on "Christ's righteousness."

LASCA.

I WANT free life, and I want fresh air;
And I sigh for the canter after the cattle,
The crack of the whips like shots in a battle,
The mellay of horns and hoofs and heads
That wars and wrangles and scatters and spreads;
The green beneath and the blue above,
And dash and danger, and life and love.
And Lasca!

Lasca used to ride
On a mouse-gray mustang close to my side,
With blue *serape* and bright-belled spur;
I laughed with joy as I looked at her!

Little knew she of books or of creeds;
An *Ave Maria* sufficed her needs;
Little she cared, save to be by my side,
To ride with me, and ever to ride,
From San Saba's shore to Lavaca's tide.
She was as bold as the billows that beat,
  She was as wild as the breezes that blow;
From her little head to her little feet
  She was swayed in her suppleness to and fro
By each gust of passion; a sapling pine,
  That grows on the edge of a Kansas bluff,
  And wars with the wind when the weather is rough,
Is like this Lasca, this love of mine.
She would hunger that I might eat,
Would take the bitter and leave me the sweet;
But once, when I made her jealous for fun,
At something I'd whispered, or looked, or done,
One Sunday in San Antonio,
To a glorious girl on the Alamo,
She drew from her garter a dear little dagger,
And—sting of a wasp!—it made me stagger!
An inch to the left, or an inch to the right,
And I shouldn't be maundering here to-night;
But she sobbed, and, sobbing, so swiftly bound
Her torn *rebosa* about the wound,
That I quite forgave her. Scratches don't count
    In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

Her eye was brown—a deep, deep brown;
  Her hair was darker than her eye;
And something in her smile and frown,
  Curled crimson lip and instep high,

Showed that there ran in each blue vein,
Mixed with the milder Aztec strain,
The vigorous vintage of old Spain.
She was alive in every limb
With feeling, to the finger tips;
  And when the sun is like a fire,
  And sky one shining soft sapphire,
One does not drink in little sips.
* * * * * * * * *
The air was heavy, the night was hot,
I sat by her side, and forgot—forgot
The herd that were taking their rest,
Forgot that the air was close opprest,
That the Texas norther comes sudden and soon,
In the dead of night or the blaze of noon;
That once let the herd at its breath take fright,
Nothing on earth can stop the flight;
And woe to the rider, and woe to the steed,
Who falls in front of their mad stampede!
* * * * * * * * *
Was that thunder? I grasped the cord
Of my swift mustang without a word.
I sprang to the saddle, and she clung behind.
Away! on a hot chase down the wind!
But never was fox-hunt half so hard
And never was steed so little spared;
For we rode for our lives. You shall hear how we
    fared,
      In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

The mustang flew, and we urged him on;
There was one chance left, and you have but one;

Halt! jump to the ground, and shoot your horse;
Crouch under his carcase, and take your chance;
And if the steers in their frantic course
Don't batter you both to pieces at once,
You may thank your star; if not, good-bye
To the quickening kiss and the long-drawn sigh,
And the open air and the open sky,
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande!

The cattle gained on us, and, just as I felt
For my old six-shooter behind in my belt,
Down came the mustang, and down came we,
Clinging together, and—what was the rest?
A body that spread itself on my breast.
Two arms that shielded my dizzy head,
Two lips that hard on my lips were prest;
Then came thunder in my ears,
As over us surged the sea of steers,
Blows that beat blood into my eyes,
And when I could rise—
Lasca was dead!

* * * * * * * * *

I gouged out a grave a few feet deep,
And there in Earth's arms I laid her to sleep;
And there she is lying, and no one knows,
And the summer shines and the winter snows;
For many a day the flowers have spread
A pall of petals over her head;
And the little gray hawk hangs aloft in the air,
And the sly coyote trots here and there,
And the black snake glides and glitters and slides
Into a rift in a cotton-wood tree;

And the buzzard sails on,
And comes and is gone,
Stately and still like a ship at sea;
And I wonder why I do not care
For the things that are like the things that were.
Does half my heart lie buried there
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande?

AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

'TIS only an old man's story,—a tale we have oft heard told,
In a thousand forms and fancies, by the young as well as old,
A tale of life dragged hellward, bound down by a demon's chain,
Till the friendly hand of temp'rance had rescued it back again!
Though only a child at the time, friends, I well remember the night
Of our first great temp'rance meeting—it came as an angel of light,
Midst the darkness of vile intemp'rance, its myriad crimes and sin;
A guiding light to the path of right, that all might enter in!
A hymn, a prayer, an address; then the chairman's voice was heard
To call on any one present just to say but a warning word.

Our pastor rose, midst cheering, but he strongly denounced
the new cause
As "a movement which none but fanatics(hear, hear, and
loud applause)
Would engage in, to injure the business of such respect-
able men,
And break up the time-honored usage of the country"—
but just then
I saw, whilst a death-like silence reigned, an old man
slowly rise
On the platform and fix on the speaker the glance of his
piercing eyes!
That look held the audience spell-bound, and I noticed
my father's cheek
Turn deadly pale as the stranger paused before he began
to speak.
At last, with an effort, the old man said, in accents low
but clear:
"You've heard, friends, that I'm a fanatic, that I have no
business here;
As men and Christians listen to truth, hear me and be
just;
My life-sands fast are running out, and speak to-night I
must!
O'er a beaconless sea I've journeyed, life's dearest hopes
I've wrecked—
God knows how my heart is aching, as I now o'er the past
reflect.
I'm alone, without friends or kindred, but it was not
always so;
For I see away o'er that ocean wild, dear forms pass to
and fro.

I once knew a doting mother's love, but I crushed her
fond old heart;
(He seemed to look at some vision, with his quivering
lips apart.)
I once loved an angel creature with her laughing eyes so
blue,
And the sweetest child that ever smiled, and a boy so
brave and true!
Perhaps, friends, you will be startled, but these hands
have dealt the blow
That severed the ties of kindred love, and laid those dear
ones low.
Ah! yes, *I was once a fanatic;* yea, more—a fiend, for then
I sacrificed my home, my all, for the riots of a drink
fiend's den.
One New Year's night I entered the hut, that charity
gave, and found
My starving wife all helpless and shivering on the ground;
With a maddened cry I demanded food, then struck her a
terrible blow;
'Food, food,' I yelled, 'quick, give me food, or by heaven
out you go!'
Just then our babe from its cradle sent up a famished
wail;
My wife caught up the little form, with its face so thin
and pale,
Saying, 'James! my once kind husband, you know we've
had no food
For near a week. Oh, do not harm my Willie that's so
good,

With a wild 'Ha! ha!' I seized them, and lifted the latch
of the door;
The storm burst in, but I hurled them out in the tempest's
wildest roar;
A terrible impulse bore me on, so I turned to my little
lad,
And snatched him from his slumbering rest—the thought
near drives me mad.
To the door I fiercely dragged him, grasping his slender
throat,
And thrust him out, but his hand had caught the pocket
of my coat.
I could not wrench his frenzied hold, so I hit him with
my fist,
Then shutting the door upon his arm, *it severed at the wrist.*
I awoke in the morn from a stupor and idly opened the
door;
With a moan I started backward—two forms fell flat to
the floor.
The blood like burning arrows shot right up to my dazed
brain,
As I called my wife by the dearest words; but, alas! I
called in vain.
The thought of my boy flashed on me, I imprinted one
fervent kiss
On those frozen lips; then searched around, but from that
black day to this
My injured boy I've never seen——" He paused awhile
and wept,
And I saw the tears on my father's cheek as I closer to
him crept.

Once more the old man faltering, "Ten long, long years
I served;
With an aching heart, in a felon's cell, the sentence I
deserved;
But there's yet a gleam of sunshine in my life's beclouded
sky,
And I long to meet my loved ones in the better land on
high!"
The pledge book lay on the table, just where the old man
stood,
He asked the men to sign it, and several said they would.
"Aye, sign it—angels would sign it," he exclaimed with
a look of joy;
"I'd sign it a thousand times in blood, if it would bring
back my boy!"
My father wrote his name down whilst he trembled in
every limb;
The old man scanned it o'er and o'er, then strangely
glanced at him.
My father raised his left arm up—a cry, a convulsive
start—
Then an old man and his injured boy were sobbing heart
to heart!
Ere the meeting closed that evening, each offered a fervent
prayer,
And many that night, who saw the sight, rejoiced that
they were there!

HERE SHE GOES—AND THERE SHE GOES.

TWO Yankee wags, one summer day,
Stopped at a tavern on their way;
Supped, frolicked, late retired to rest,
And woke to breakfast on the best.

The breakfast over, Tom and Will
Sent for the landlord and the bill;
Will looked it over; "Very right—
But hold! what wonder meets my sight?
Tom! the surprise is quite a shock"!
"What wonder? where?" "The clock! the clock!"
Tom and the landlord in amaze
Stared at the clock with stupid gaze,
And for a moment neither spoke;
At last the landlord silence broke:

"You mean the clock that's ticking there?
I see no wonder, I declare;
Though may be, if the truth were told,
'Tis rather ugly—somewhat old;
Yet time it keeps to half a minute,
But, if you please, what wonder's in it?"

"Tom, don't you recollect," said Will,
"The clock in Jersey near the mill,
The very image of this present,
With which I won the wager pleasant?"
Will ended with a knowing wink.
Tom scratched his head, and tried to think.
"Sir, begging pardon for inquiring,"
The landlord said, with grin admiring,
"What wager was it?"

"You remember,
It happened, Tom, in last December,
In sport I bet a Jersey Blue
That it was more than he could do,
To make his finger go and come
In keeping with the pendulum,
Repeating, till one hour should close,
Still, *here she goes—and there she goes.*
He lost the bet in half a minute."

"Well, if I would, the deuce is in it!"
Exclaimed the landlord; "try me yet,
And fifty dollars be the bet."
"Agreed, but we will play some trick
To make you of the bargain sick!"
"I'm up to that!"

"Don't make us wait;
Begin, the clock is striking eight."
He seats himself, and left and right
His finger wags with all his might,
And hoarse his voice, and hoarser grows,
With "Here she goes—and there she goes!"
"Hold" said the Yankee, "plank the ready!"
The landlord wagged his fingers steady
While his left hand, as well as able,
Conveyed a purse upon the table.

"Tom, with the money let's be off!"
This made the landlord only scoff.
He heard them running down the stair,
But was not tempted from his chair;

Thought he, "The fools! I'll bite them yet!
So poor a trick sha'n't win the bet."
And loud and loud the chorus rose
Of "Here she goes—and there she goes!"
While right and left his fingers swung
In keeping to his clock and tongue.
His mother happened in to see
Her daughter; "Where is Mrs B——,
When will she come, as you suppose?
Son!"
"Here she goes—and there she goes!"

"Here! where?"—the lady in surprise
His finger followed with her eyes;
"Son, why that steady gaze, and sad?
Those words—that motion—are you mad?
But here's your wife—perhaps she knows
And——"
"Here she goes—and there she goes!"

His wife surveyed him with alarm,
And rushed to him and seized his arm;
He shook her off, and to and fro
His finger persevered to go,
While curled his very nose with ire,
That she against him should conspire,
And with more furious tone arose
The "Here she goes—and there she goes!"

"Lawks!" screamed the wife, "I'm in a whirl!
Run down and bring the little girl;
She is his darling, and who knows
But——"
"Here she goes—and there she goes!"

"Lawks! he is mad! What made him thus?
Good lack! What will become of us?
Run for the doctor—run—run—run—
For Doctor Brown, and Doctor Dun
And Doctor Black, and Doctor White,
And Doctor Grey, with all your might."

The doctors came, and looked and wondered,
And shook their heads, and paused and pondered,
Till one proposed he should be bled,
"No—leeched you mean," the other said.
"Clap on a blister," roared another!
"No—cup him"—"No—trepan him, brother!"
A sixth would recommend a purge,
The next would an emetic urge;
The eighth, just come from a dissection,
His verdict gave for an injection;
The last produced a box of pills,
A certain cure for earthly ills;
"I had a patient yesternight,"
Quoth he, "and wretched was her plight,
And as the only means to save her,
Three dozen patent pills I gave her,
And by to-morrow I suppose
That——"

"Here she goes—and there she goes"

"You are all fools," the lady said,
"The way is, just to shave his head,
Run, bid the barber come anon."
"Thanks, mother," thought her clever son,
"*You* help the knaves that would have bit me,
But all creation sha'n't outwit me."

Thus to himself, while to and fro
His finger perseveres to go,
And from his lips no accent flows
But *here she goes—and there she goes!*

The barber came—"Lord help him! what
A queer customer I've got;
But we must do our best to save him—
So hold him, gemmen, while I shave him!"
But here the doctors interpose—
"A woman never——"
"There she goes!"

"A woman is no judge of physic,
Not even when her baby is sick.
He must be bled"—"No—no—a blister";
"A purge, you mean"—"I say a clyster";
"No—cup him"—"Leech him"—"Pills! pills! pills!"
And all the house the uproar fills.

What means that smile? What means that shiver?
The landlord's limbs with rapture quiver,
And triumph brightens up his face—
His finger yet shall win the race!
The clock is on the strike of nine,
And up he starts—"'Tis mine! 'tis mine!"

"What do you mean?"
"I mean the fifty!
I never spent an hour so thrifty;
But you, who tried to make me lose,
Go, burst with envy, if you choose!
But how is this! Where are they?" "Who?"
"The gentlemen—I mean the two

Came yesterday—are they below?"
"They galloped off an hour ago."
"Oh, purge me! blister! shave and bleed!
For, hang the knaves, I'm mad indeed!"

THE LITTLE RID HIN.

WELL, thin, there was once't upon a time, away off in the ould country, livin' all her lone in the woods, in a wee bit iv a house be herself, a little rid hin. Nice an' quite she was, and nivir did no kind o' harrum in her life. An' there lived out over the hill, in a din o' the rocks, a crafty ould felly iv a fox. An' this same ould villain iv a fox, he laid awake o' nights, and he prowled round shly iv a day-time, thinkin' always so busy how he'd git the little rid hin, an' carry her home an' bile her up for his shupper. But the wise little rid hin nivir went intil her bit iv a house, but she locked the door afther her, and pit the kay in her pocket. So the ould rashkill iv a fox, he watched, an' he prowled, an' he laid awake nights, till he came all to skin an' bone, an' sorra a ha'porth o' the little rid hin could he git at. But at lasht there came a shchame intil his wicked ould head, an' he tuk a big bag one mornin', over his shouldher, an' he says till his mother, says he, "Mother, have the pot all bilin' agin I come home, for I'll bring the little rid hin to-night for our shupper." An' away he wint, over the hill, an' came crapin' shly an' soft through the woods to where the little rid hin lived in her shnug bit iv a house. An' shure, jist at the very minute that he got along, out comes the little rid hin out

iv the door, to pick up shticks to bile her tay-kettle. "Begorra, now, but I'll have yees," says the shly ould fox, an' in he shlips, unbeknownst, intil the house, an' hides behind the door. An' in comes the little rid hin, a minute afther, with her apron full of shticks, an' shuts to the door an' locks it, an' pits the kay in her pocket. An' thin she turns round,—an' there shtands the baste iv a fox in the corner. Well, thin, what did she do, but jist dhrop down her shticks, and fly up in a great fright and flutter to the big bame acrass inside o' the roof, where the fox couldn't get at her!

"Ah, ha!" says the ould fox, "I'll soon bring yees down out o' that!" An' he began to whirrul round, an' round, an' round, fashter, an' fashter, an' fashter, on the floor, afther his big, bushy tail, till the little rid hin got so dizzy wid lookin' that she jist tumbled down aff the bame, and the fox whipped her up and popped her intil his bag, and shtarted off home in a minute. An' he wint up the wood, an' down the wood, half the day long, with the little rid hid shut up shmotherin' in the bag. Sorra a know she knowd where she was at all, at all. She thought she was all biled an' ate up, an' finished, shure! But, by an' by, she remimbered herself, an' pit her hand in her pocket, an' tuk out her little bright schissors, and shnipped a big hole in the bag behind, an' out she leapt, and picked up a big shtone an' popped it intil the bag, an' rin aff home, an' locked the door.

An' the fox he tugged away up over the hill, with the big shtone at his back thumpin' his shouldhers, thinkin' to himsilf how heavy the little rid hin was, an' what a fine shupper he'd have. An' whin he came in sight iv his din

in the rocks, and shpied his ould mother a-watchin' for him at the door, he says, "Mother! have ye the pot bilin'?" An' the ould mother says, "Sure an' it is; an' have ye the little rid hin?" "Yes, jist here in me bag. Open the lid o' the pot till I pit her in," says he.

An' the ould mother fox she lifted the lid o' the pot, an' the rashkill untied the bag, and hild it over the pot o' bilin' wather, an' shuk in the big heavy shtone. An' the bilin' wather shplashed up all over the rogue iv a fox, an' his mother, an' shcalded them both to death. An' the little rid hin lived safe in her house foriver afther.

EUGENE ARAM'S DREAM.

'TWAS in the prime of summer-time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Come bounding out of school;
There were some that ran, and some that leapt
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped, with gamesome minds,
And souls untouched by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drove the wickets in:
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran,—
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can,

But the usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch Heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease;
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees.

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide;
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome;
With a fast and fervent grasp.
He strained the dusty covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp:
"O God! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp!"

Then leaping on his feet upright:
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book.

"My gentle lad, what is't you read,
Romance or fairy fable?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?"

The young boy gave an upward glance,—
"It is 'The Death of Abel.'"

The usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,—
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain;

And, long since then, of bloody men
Whose deeds tradition saves;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod,—
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God;

He told how murderers walked the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain;
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain.

"And well," quoth he, "I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,
Who spill life's sacred stream!

For why? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder in a dream!

"One that had never done me wrong,
A feeble man, and old;
I led him to a lonely field,—
The moon shone clear and cold;
'Now here,' said I, 'this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!'

"Two sudden blows with ragged stick,
And with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,
And then the deed was done;
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone.

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still,
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill.

"And, lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame;
I took the dead man by his hand,
And called upon his name.

"O God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain;
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out amain;

For every clot a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain.

"My head was like an ardent coal;
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the devil's price;
A dozen times I groaned; the dead
Had never groaned but twice.

"And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice, the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite:
'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead,
And hide it from my sight!'

"I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme.
My gentle boy, remember this
Is *nothing but a dream!*

"Down went the corpse with hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening in the school.

"O heaven! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in evening hymn;

Like a devil of the pit I seemed,
Mid holy cherubim.

"And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But guilt was my grim chamberlain,
That lighted me to bed;
And drew my midnight curtains 'round,
With fingers bloody red.

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at sleep;
For sin has rendered unto her
The keys of hell to keep.

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting, horrid hint,
That racked me all the time,—
A mighty yearning like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime.

"One stern, tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,
Still urging me to go and see
The dead man in his grave.

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black, accursed pool,
With a wild, misgiving eye;

And I saw the dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing;
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up, and ran;
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began:
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I *hid* the murdered man;

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was otherwhere;
As soon as the midday task was done,
In secret I was there;
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And *still* the corpse was bare.

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep,—
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging sprite,
Till blood for blood atones;
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,

And years have rotted off his flesh,
The world shall see his bones.

"O God! that horrid, *horrid* dream
Besets me now, *awake;*
Again, again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake,

"And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mold allow;
The horrid thing *pursues* my soul,—
It stands before me now!"
The fearful boy looked up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin's eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

PADDY'S EXCELSIOR.

'TWAS growing dark so terrible fasht,
Whin through a town up the mountain there pashed
A broth of a boy, to his neck in the shnow;
As he walked, his shillalah he swung to and fro,
Saying: "It's up till the top I'm bound for to go,
Be jabers!"

He looked mortial sad, and his eye was as bright
As a fire of turf on a could winther night,
And niver a word that he said cowld ye tell
As he opened his mouth and let out a yell,
"It's up till the top of the mountain I'll go,
Onless covered up wid this bothersome shnow,
Be jabers!"

Through the windows he saw as he thraveled along
The light of the candles and the fires so warm;
But a big chunk of ice hung over his head.
With a shnivel and groan, "By St. Patrick!" he said,
"It's up till the very *tip top* I will rush,
And then if it falls, it's not meself it'll crush,
Be jabers!"

"Whisht a bit," said an owld man, whose head was as white
As the shnow that fell down on that miserable night;
"Shure, ye'll fall in the wather, me bit of a lad,
For the night is so dark, and the walkin' is bad."
But shure, he'd not lisht to a word that was said,
For he'd go to the top, if he wint on his head,
"Be jabers!"

A bright, buxom young girl, such as like to be kissed,
Axed him wadn't he shtop, and how *could* he resist?
So, snapping his fingers and winking his eye,
While shmiling upon her he made this reply:
"Faith, I meant to kape on till I got to the top,
But, as yer shwate self has axed me, I may as well shtop,
Be jabers!"

He shtopped all night, and he shtopped all day,
And ye musn't be axing whin he *did* go away;
For wadn't he be a bastely gossoon
To be lavin' his darlint in the shwate honey-moon?
Whin the owld man has praties enough and to spare,
Shure he moight as well shtay if he's comfortable there,
Be jabers!

KENTUCKY PHILOSOPHY.

YOU Wi'yam, cum 'ere, suh, dis instunce. Wu' dat you got under dat box?

I do' want no foolin'—you hear me? Wut you say? Ain't nu'h'n but *rocks?*

'Peahs ter me you's owdashus p'ticler. S'posin' dey's uv a new kine.

I'll des take a look at dem rocks. Hi, yi! der yer think dat I's bline?

I calls dat a plain water-million, you scamp, en I knows whah it growed;

It come from de Jimmerson cawn fiel', dah on ter side er de road.

You stole it, you rascal—you stole it! I watched you fum down in de lot,

En time I gets th'ough wid you, nigger, you won't eb'n be a grease spot!

I'll fix you. Mirandy! *Mirandy!* go cut me a hick'ry—make 'ase!

En cut me de toughes' en keenes' you c'n fine anywhah on de place.

I'll larn you, Mr. Wi'yam Joe Vetters, ter steal en ter lie, you young sinner,
Disgracin' yo' ole Christian mammy, en makin' her leave cookin' dinner!

Now ain't you ashamed er yo'se'f, sur? I is. I's 'shamed you's my son!
En de holy accorjan angel he's 'shamed er wut you has done;
En he's tuk it down up yander in coal-black, blood-red letters—
"One water-million stoled by Wi'yam Josephus Vetters."
En wut you s'posen Brer Bascom, yo' teacher at Sunday-school,
'Ud say ef he knowed how you's broke de good Lawd's Gol'n Rule?
Boy, weah's de raisin' I give you? Is you boun' fuh ter be a black villiun?
I's s'prised dat a chile er yo' mammy 'ud steal any man's water-million.

En I's now guiner cut it right open, en you shain't have nary bite,
Fuh a boy who'll steal water-millions—en dat in de day's broad light—
Ain't—*Lawdy!* its *green!* Mirandy! Mi-rand-dy! come on wi' dat switch!
Well, stealin' a g-r-e-e-n water-million! who ever yered tell er des sich.

Cain't tell w'en dey's ripe? W'y, you thump 'em, en
we'n dey go pank dey is green;
But w'en dey go *punk*, now you mine me, dey's ripe, en
dat's des wut I mean.
En nex' time you hook water-millions—*you* heered me, you
ign'ant, you hunk,
Ef you do' want a likin all over, be sho dat dey allers go
"punk!"

THE OLD MAN GOES TO TOWN.

WELL, wife, I've been to 'Frisco, an' I called to see
the boys;
I'm tired, an' more'n half deafened with the travel and
the noise;
So I'll sit down by the chimbley, and rest my weary
bones,
And tell how I was treated by our 'ristocratic sons.

As soon's I reached the city, I hunted up our Dan—
Ye know he's now a celebrated wholesale business man.
I walked down from the depo'—but Dan keeps a country
seat—
An' I thought to go home with him, an' rest my weary
feet.

All the way I kep' a thinkin' how famous it 'ud be
To go 'round the town together—my grown-up boy an'
me,
An' remember the old times, when my little "curly
head"
Used to cry out "Good-night, papa!" from his little
trundle-bed.

I never thought a minute that he wouldn't want to see
His gray an' worn old father, or would be ashamed of me;
So when I seen his office, with a sign writ out in gold,
I walked in 'thout knockin'—but the old man was too bold.

Dan was settin' by a table, an' a-writin' in a book;
He knowed me in a second; but he gave me such a look!
He never said a word o' you, but axed about the grain,
An' ef I thought the valley didn't need a little rain.

I didn't stay a great while, but inquired after Rob;
Dan said he lived upon the hill—I think they call it Nob;
An' when I left, Dan, in a tone that almost broke me down,
Said, "Call an' see me, won't ye, whenever you're in town?"

It was rather late that evenin' when I found our Robert's house;
There was music, lights, and dancin' and a mighty big carouse.
At the door a nigger met me, an' he grinned from ear to ear to ear,
Sayin' "Keerds ob invitation, or you nebber git in here."

I said I was Bob's father; an' with another grin
The nigger left me standin' and disappeared within.
Bob came out on the porch—he didn't order me away;
But he said he hoped to see me at his office the next day.

Then I started fur a tavern, fur I knowed there, anyway,
They wouldn't turn me out so long's I'd money fur to pay.
An' Rob an' Dan had left me about the streets to roam,
An' neither of them axed me if I'd money to git home.

It may be the way o' rich folks—I don't say 'at it is not—
But we remember some things Dan and Rob have quite forgot.
We didn't quite expect this, wife, when, twenty years ago,
We mortgaged the old homestead to give Rob and Dan a show.

I didn't look fur Charley, but I happened just to meet
Him with a lot o' friends o' his'n, a-comin' down the street.
I thought I'd pass on by him, for fear our youngest son
Would show he was ashamed o' me, as Rob and Dan had done.

But as soon as Charley seen me, he, right afore 'em all,
Said: "God bless me, there's my father!" as loud as he could bawl.
Then he introduced me to his frien's, an' sent 'em all away,
Tellin' 'em he'd see 'em later, but was busy for that day.

Then he took me out to dinner, an' he axed about the house,
About you, an' Sally's baby, an' the chickens, pigs an' cows;
He axed about his brothers, addin' that 'twas ruther queer,
But he hadn't seen one uv 'em fur mighty nigh a year.

Then he took me to his lodgin', in an attic four stairs high—
He said he liked it better' cause 'twas nearer to the sky.

An' he said: "I've only one room, but my bed is pretty wide,"
An' so we slept together, me an' Charley, side by side.

Next day we went together to the great Mechanics' Fair,
An' some o' Charley's picters was on exhibition there.
He said if he could sell 'em, which he hoped to pretty soon,
He'd make us all a visit, an' be richer than Muldoon."

An' so two days an' nights we passed, an' when I come away,
Poor Charley said the time was short, an' begged fur me to stay.
Then he took me in a buggy an' druv me to the train,
An' said in just a little while he'd see us all again.

You know we never thought our Charley would ever come to much;
He was always readin' novels an' poetry and such.
There was nothing on the farm he ever seemed to want to do,
An' when he took to paintin' he disgusted me clear through!

So we gave to Rob and Dan all we had to call our own,
An' left poor Charley penniless to make his way alone;
He's only a poor painter; Rob and Dan are rich as sin;
But Charley's worth a pair of 'em with all their gold thrown in.

Those two grand men, dear wife, were once our prattling babes—an' yet
It seems as if a mighty gulf 'twixt them an' us is set;
An' they'll never know the old folks till life's troubled journey's past,
And rich and poor are equal underneath the sod at last.

An' maybe when we all meet on the resurrection morn,
With our earthly glories fallen, like the husks from the ripe corn,—
When the righteous Son of Man the awful sentence shall have said,
The brightest crown that's shining there may be on Charley's head.

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL.

THE snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night,
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and burdock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl;
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new roofed with Carrara
Came chanticleer's muffled crow;
The stiff rails were softened to swan's down;
And still fluttered down the snow,

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whisking by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father,
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the laden sky,
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud-like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered.
"The snow that husheth all,—
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall."

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know,
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

HOW "RUBY" PLAYED.

AS RECITED BY JAS. S. BURDETT.

Jud Brownin, when visiting New York, goes to hear Rubinstein. and gives the following description of his playing.

WELL, sir, he had the blamedest, biggest, catty-cornedest pianner you ever laid eyes on; somethin' like a distracted billiard-table on three legs. The lid was hoisted, and mighty well it was. If it hadn't been he'd a

tore the entire inside clean out, and scattered 'em to the four winds of heaven.

Played well? You bet he did; but don't interrupt me. When he first sit down, he 'peared to keer mighty little 'bout playin', and wisht he hadn't come. He tweedle-leedled a little on the treble, and twoodle-oodled some on the base—just foolin' and boxin' the thing's jaws for bein' in the way. And I says to a man settin' next to me, says I, "What sort of fool playin' is that?" And he says, "Heish!" But presently his hands commenced chasin' one another up and down the keys like a parcel of rats scamperin' through a garret very swift. Parts of it was sweet, though, and reminded me of a sugar squirrel turnin' the wheel of a candy cage.

"Now," I says to my neighbor, "he's showin' off. He thinks he's a doin' of it, but he ain't got no idee, no plan of nothin'. If he'd play me a tune of some kind or other, I'd——"

But my neighbor says, "Heish!" very impatient.

I was just about to get up and go home, bein, tired of that foolishness, when I heard a little bird waking up away off in the woods, and call sleepy-like to his mate, and I looked up and see that Ruby was beginning to take some interest in his business, and I sit down again, It was the peep of day. The light came faint from the east, the breezes blowed gentle and fresh; some more birds waked up in the orchard, then some more in the trees near the house, and all begun singin' together. People began to stir, and the gal opened the shutters. Just then the first beam of the sun fell upon the blossoms a little more, and it techt the roses on the bushes, and the next thing it was

broad day; the sun fairly blazed, the birds sung like they'd split their little throats; all the leaves was movin', and flashin' diamonds of dew, and the whole wide world was bright and happy as a king, Seemed to me like there was a good breakfast in every house in the land, and not a sick child or woman anywhere. It was a fine mornin'.

And I says to my neighbor, "That's music, that is."

But he glared at me like he'd like to cut my throat.

Presently the wind turned; it began to thicken up, and a kind of gray mist came over things; I got low-spirited directly. Then a silver rain begun to fall. I could see the drops touch the ground; some flashed up like long pearl ear-rings, and the rest rolled away like round rubies. It was pretty, but melancholy. Then the pearls gathered themselves into long strands and necklaces, and then they melted into thin silver streams, running between golden gravels, and then the streams joined each other at the bottom of the hill, and made a brook that flowed silent, except that you could kinder see the music, specially when the bushes on the banks moved as the music went along down the valley. I could smell the flowers in the meadow. But the sun didn't shine, nor the birds sing; it was a foggy day, but not cold.

The most curious thing was the little white angel boy, like you see in pictures, that run ahead of the music brook and led it on, and on, away out of the world, where no man ever was, certain. I could see that boy just as plain as I see you. Then the moonlight came, without any sunset, and shone on the graveyards where some few ghosts lifted their hands and went over the wall, and between the black, sharptop trees splendid marble houses rose up, with

fine ladies in the lit-up windows, and men that loved 'em, but could never get a-nigh 'em, who played on guitars under the trees, and made me that miserable I could have cried because I wanted to love somebody, I don't know who, better than the men with the guitars did.

Then the sun went down, it got dark, the wind moaned and wept like a lost child for its dead mother, and I could a got up then and there and preached a better sermon than any I ever listened to. There wasn't a thing in the world left to live for, not a blame thing, and yet I didn't want the music to stop one bit. It was happier to be miserable than to be happy without being miserable. I couldn't understand it. I hung my head and pulled out my handkerchief, and blowed my nose loud to keep me from cryin'. My eyes is weak anyway. I didn't want anybody to be a-gazin' at me a-snivlin', and it's nobody's business what I do with my nose. It's mine. But some several glared at me, mad as blazes. Then, all of a sudden, old Rubin changed his tune. He ripped out and he rared, he tipped and he tared, he pranced and he charged like the grand entry at a circus. 'Peared to me that all the gas in the house was turned on at once, things got so bright, and I hilt up my head, ready to look any man in the face, and not afraid of nothin'. It was a circus, and a brass band and a big ball all agoin' on at the same time. He lit into them keys like a thousand of brick; he gave 'em no rest day or night; he set every livin' joint in me a-goin'; and not bein' able to stand it no longer, I jumped, sprang onto my seat, and jest hollered:

"*Go it, Rube!*"

Every blamed man, woman, and child in the house riz

on me and shouted, "Put him out!" "Put him out!"

"Put your great-grandmother's grizzly-gray-greenish cat into the middle of next month!" I says. "Tech me if you dare! I paid my money, and you just come a-nigh me!"

With that some several policemen run up, and I had to simmer down. But I could 'a' fit any fool that laid hands on me, for I was bound to hear Ruby out or die.

He had changed his tune again. He hop-light ladies and tip-toed fine from end to end of the key-board. He played soft and low and solemn. I heard the church-bells over the hills. The candles of heaven was lit, one by one I saw the stars rise. The great organ of eternity began to play from the world's end to the world's end, and all the angels went to prayers. * * * Then the music changed to water; full of feeling that couldn't be thought, and began to drop—drip, drop—drip, drop, clear and sweet, like tears of joy falling into a lake of glory. It was sweeter than that. It was as sweet as a sweet-heart sweetened with white sugar mixt with powdered silver and seed diamonds. It was too sweet. I tell you the audience cheered. Rubin he kinder bowed like he wanted to say, "Much obleeged, but I'd rather you wouldn't interrup' me."

He stopt a moment or two to ketch breath. Then he got mad. He run his fingers through his hair, he shoved up his sleeve, he opened his coat-tails a leetle further, he drug up his stool, he leaned over, and, sir, he just went for that old pianner. He slapt her face, he boxed her jaws, he pulled her nose, he pinched her ears, and he

scratched her cheeks, until she fairly yelled. He knockt her down, and he stampt on her shameful. She bellowed, she bleated like a calf, she howled like a hound, she squealed like a pig, she shrieked like a rat, and *then* he wouldn't let her up. He ran a quarter-stretch down the low grounds of the base, till he got clean in the bowels of the earth, and you heard thunder galloping after thunder, through the hollows and caves of perdition, and then he fox-chased his right hand with his left till he got way out of the treble into the clouds, whar the notes was finer than the pints of cambric needles, and you couldn't hear nothin' but the shadders of 'em. And *then* he wouldn't let the old pianner go. He for'ard two'd, he crost over first gentleman, he chassade right and left, back to your places, he all hands'd aroun', ladies to the right, promenade all, in and out, here and there, back and forth, up and down, perpetual motion, double-twisted and turned and tacked and tangled into forty eleven thousand doublebow knots.

By jinks! it was a mixtery. And then he wouldn't let the old pianner go. He fecht up his right wing, he fecht up his left wing, he fecht up his centre, he fecht up his reserves. He fired by file, he fired by platoons, by company, by regiments, and by brigades. He opened his cannon—siege guns down thar, Napoleons here, twelve-pounders yonder—big guns, little guns, middle-sized guns, round shot, shells, shrapnels, grape, canister, mortar, mines, and magazines, every livin' battery and bomb a-goin' at the same time. The house trembled, the lights danced, the walls shuk, the floor come up, the ceilin' come down, the sky split, the ground rokt—heavens

and earth, creation, sweet potatoes, Moses, ninepences, glory, ten-penny nails, Sampson in a 'simmon tree, Tump Tompson in a tumbler-cart, roodle-oodle-oodle-oodle—ruddle-uddle-uddle-uddle — raddle-addle-addle-addle — riddle-iddle-iddle-iddle — reedle-eedle-eedle-eedle — p-r-r-r-r-r-lang! Bang!!!! lang! per-lang! p-r-r-r-r-r!! Bang!!!

With that bang! he lifted himself bodily into the air, and he come down with his knees, his ten fingers, his ten toes, his elbows, and his nose, striking every single, solitary key on the pianner at the same time. The thing busted, and went off into seventeen hundred and fifty-seven thousand five hundred and forty-two hemi-demi-semi quivers, and I know'd no mo'.

When I come to, I were under ground about twenty foot, in a place they call Oyster Bay, a treatin' a Yankee that I never laid eyes on before, and never expect to again. Day was brakin' by the time I got to the St. Nicholas Hotel, and I pledge you my word I did not know my name. The man asked me the number of my room, and I told him, "Hot music on the half-shell for two!"—

WHAT WAS HIS CREED?

HE left a load of anthracite
In front of a poor widow's door,
When the deep snow, frozen and white,
Wrapped street and square, mountain and moor.
That was his deed;
He did it well;
"What was his creed?"
I cannot tell.

Blessed "in his basket and his store,"
In sitting down and rising up;
When more he got he gave the more,
Withholding not the crust and cup;
He took the lead
In each good task;
"What was his creed?"
I did not ask.

His charity was like the snow,
Soft, white, and silken in its fall;
Not like the noisy winds that blow
From shivering trees the leaves; a pall
For flower and weed,
Dropping below;
"What was his creed."
The poor may know.

He had great faith in loaves of bread
For hungry people, young and old;
And hope inspired, kind words he said,
To those he sheltered from the cold,
For he must feed
As well as pray;
"What was his creed?"
I cannot say.

In words he did not put his trust,
In faith his words he never writ;
He loved to share his cup and crust
With all mankind who needed it;

In time of need
A friend was he;
"What was his creed?"
He told not me.

He put his trust in Heaven, and
Worked right well with hand and head;
And what he gave in charity
Sweetened his sleep and daily bread.
Let us take heed,
For life is brief;
"What was his creed?"
"What his belief?"

THE FALL OF PEMBERTON MILL.

"At ten minutes before five, on Tuesday, the 10th of January, the Pemberton mill, all hands being at the time on duty, fell to the ground."

SO the record flashed over the telegraph wires, sprang into large type in the newspapers, and passed from lip to lip.

A vast crowd surged through the streets. Women with white lips were counting the mills—Pacific, Atlantic, Washington—Pemberton! Where was Pemberton?

Where Pemberton had blazed with its lamps last night, and hummed with its iron lips this noon, a cloud of dust, black, silent, horrible, puffed a hundred feet into the air.

Asenath opened her eyes after a time. Beautiful green and purple lights had been dancing about her, but she had had no thoughts. It occurred to her now that she must have been struck upon the head. The church clocks were

striking eight. A bonfire, which had been built at a distance to light the citizens in the work of rescue, cast a little gleam in through the debris across her two hands, which lay clasped together at her side. One of her fingers, she saw, was gone; it was the finger which held Dick's little engagement ring. The red beam lay across her forehead, and drops dripped from it upon her eyes. Her feet, still tangled in the gearing which had tripped her, were buried beneath a pile of bricks.

A broad piece of flooring that had fallen slantwise roofed her in and saved her from the mass of iron-work overhead, which would have crushed the breath out of Hercules. Fragments of looms, shafts and pillars were in heaps about. Some one whom she could not see was dying just behind her. A little girl who worked in her room—a mere child—was crying between her groans for her mother. Del Ivory sat in a little open space, cushioned about with reels of cotton; she had a shallow gash upon her cheek; she was wringing her hands. They were at work from the outside, sawing entrances through the labyrinth of planks. A dead woman lay close by, and Sene saw them draw her out. It was Meg Match. One of the pretty Irish girls was crushed quite out of sight; only one hand was free; she moved it feebly. They could hear her calling for Jimmy Mahoney, Jimmy Mahoney! and would they be sure and give him back the handkerchief? Poor Jimmy Mahoney! By and by she called no more; and in a little while the hand was still. The other side of the slanted flooring some one prayed aloud. She had a little baby at home. She was asking God to take care of it for her—"For Christ's sake," she said. Sene listened long for the Amen, but it

was never spoken. Beyond they dug a man out from under a dead body, unhurt. He crawled to his feet, and broke into furious blasphemies.

As consciousness came fully, agony grew. Sene shut her lips and folded her bleeding hands together, and uttered no cry. Del did screaming enough for two, she thought. Her hurt, she knew, was not unto death; but it must be cared for before very long. How far could she support this slow bleeding away?

She thought of her father, of Dick; of the bright little kitchen and supper-table set for three; of the song that she had sung in the flush of the morning. Life—even her life—grew sweet, now that it was slipping from her.

Del cried presently that they were cutting them out. The glare of the bonfires struck through an opening; saws and axes flashed; voices grew distinct.

"They never can get at me," said Sene. "I must be able to crawl. If you could get some of those bricks off of my feet, Del!"

Del took off two or three in a frightened way; then, seeing the blood on them, sat down and cried.

A Scotch girl, with one arm shattered, crept up and removed the pile; then fainted.

The opening broadened; brightened; the sweet night wind blew in; the safe night sky shone through. Sene's heart leaped within her. Out in the wind and under the sky she should stand again, after all! Back in the little kitchen, where the sun shone, and she could sing a song, there would yet be a place for her. She worked her head from under the beam, and raised herself upon her elbow.

At that moment she heard a cry:

"Fire! Fire! Fire! THE RUINS ARE ON FIRE!"

A man working over the debris from the outside had taken the notion—it being rather dark just there—to carry a lantern with him.

"For Heaven's sake," a voice cried from the crowd, "don't stay there with that light!"

But while this voice yet sounded it was the dreadful fate of the man with the lantern to let it fall, and it broke upon the ruined mass.

"Del," said Sene presently, "I smell the smoke." And in a little while, "How red it is growing away over there at the left!"

To lie here and watch the hideous redness crawling after her, springing at her! It had seemed greater than reason could bear at first.

They were working to save her, with rigid, stern faces. A plank snapped, a rod yielded; they drew out the Scotch girl; her hair was signed; then a man with blood upon his face and wrists held down his arms.

"There's time for one more! God save the rest of ye—I can't!"

Del sprang; then stopped—even Del—stopped, ashamed, and looked back at the cripple.

Asenath at this sat up erect. The latent heroism in her awoke. All her thoughts grew clear and bright. The tangled skein of her perplexed and troubled winter unwound suddenly. This, then, was the way. It was better so. God had provided Himself a lamb for the burnt-offering.

So she said, "Go, Del, and tell him that I sent you with my dear love, and that it's all right."

And Del at the first word went. She sat and watched

them draw her out; it was a slow process; the loose sleeve of her factory sacque was scorched.

Somebody at work outside turned suddenly and caught her. It was Dick. The love which he had fought so long broke free of barrier in that hour. He kissed her pink arm where the burnt sleeve fell off. He uttered a cry at the blood upon her face. She turned faint with the sense of safety, and with a face as white as her own he bore her away in his arms to the hospital over the crimson snow.

Asenath looked out through the glare and smoke with parched lips. For a scratch upon the girl's smooth cheek he had quite forgotten her. They had left her, tombed alive here in this furnace, and gone their happy way. Yet it gave her a curious sense of relief and triumph. If this were all that she could be to him, the thing which she had done was right, quite right. God must have known. She turned away, and shut her eyes again.

When she opened them, neither Dick, nor Del, nor crimsoned snow, nor sky were there, only the smoke writhing up a pillar of blood-red flame.

The child who had called for her mother began to sob out that she was afraid to die alone.

"Come here, Molly," said Sene. "Can you crawl around?"

Molly crawled around.

"Put your head in my lap, and your arms about my waist, and I will put my hands in yours—so. There! I guess that's better, isn't it?"

But they had not given them up yet. In the still unburnt rubbish at the right some one had wrenched an opening within a foot of Sene's face. They clawed at the solid

iron pintles like savage things. A fireman fainted in the glow.

"Give it up!" cried the crowd from behind. "It can't be done! Fall back!"—then hushed, awe-struck.

An old man was crawling along upon his hands and knees over the heated bricks. He was a very old man. His gray hair blew about in the wind.

"I want my little gal!" he said. "Can't anybody tell me where to find my little gal?"

A rough-looking young fellow pointed in perfect silence through the smoke.

"I'll have her out yet. I'm an old man, but I can help. She's my little gal, ye see. Hand me that there dipper of water; it'll keep her from choking, maybe. Now! Keep cheery, Sene! Your old father'll get ye out. Keep up good heart, child! That's it!"

"It's no use, father. Don't feel bad, father. I don't mind it very much."

"No more ye needn't, Senath, for it'll be over in a minute. Don't be downcast yet! We'll have ye safe at home before ye know it. Drink a little more water—do now! They'll get at ye now, sure!"

But out above the crackle and the roar a woman's voice rang like a bell:

"We're going home to die no more."

A child's notes quavered in the chorus. From sealed and unseen graves white young lips swelled the glad refrain:

"We're going, going home."

The crawling smoke turned yellow, turned red. Voice after voice broke and hushed utterly. One only sang on

like silver. It flung defiance down at death. It chimed into the lurid sky without a tremor. For one stood beside her in the furnace, and His form was like unto the form of the Son of God. Their eyes met. Why should not Asenath sing?

"Senath!" cried the old man out upon the burning bricks; he was scorched now, from his gray hair to his patched boots.

The answer came triumphantly:

> "To die no more, to die no more,
> We're going home to die no more."

"Sene! little Sene!"

But some one pulled him back.

THE LITTLE BLACK-EYED REBEL.

A BOY drove into the city, his wagon loaded down
With food to feed the people of the British-governed town;
And the little black-eyed rebel, so cunning and so sly,
Was watching for his coming, from the corner of her eye.

His face was broad and honest, his hands were brown and tough,
The clothes he wore upon him were home-spun, coarse and rough;
But one there was who watched him, who long time lingered nigh,
And cast at him sweet glances, from the corner of her eye.

He drove up to the market, he waited in the line:
His apples and potatoes were fresh and fair and fine.

But long and long he waited, and no one came to buy,
Save the black-eyed rebel watching from the corner of her eye.

"Now, who will buy my apples?" he shouted long and loud;
And, "Who wants my potatoes?" he repeated to the crowd:
But from all the people round him came no word of reply,
Save the black-eyed rebel answering from the corner of her eye.

For she knew that 'neath the lining of the coat he wore that day
Were long letters from the husbands and the fathers far away,
Who were fighting for the freedom that they meant to gain, or die;
And a tear like silver glistened in the corner of her eye.

But the treasures—how to get them? crept the question through her mind,
Since keen enemies were watching for what prizes they might find;
And she paused awhile and pondered, with a pretty little sigh;
Then resolve crept through her features, and a shrewdness fired her eye.

So she resolutely walked up to the wagon old and red,
"May I have a dozen apples for a kiss?" she sweetly said;

And the brown face flushed to scarlet, for the boy was
somewhat shy,
And he saw her laughing at him from the corner of her
eye.

You may have them all for nothing, and more, if you
want," quoth he.
"I will have them, my good fellow, but can pay for
them," said she.
And she clambered on the wagon, minding not those who
were by,
With a laugh of reckless romping in the corner of her eye.

Clinging round his brawny neck, she clasped her fingers
white and small,
And then whispered, "Quick! the letters! thrust them
underneath my shawl!
Carry back again this package, and be sure that you are
spry!"
And she sweetly smiled upon him from the corner of her
eye.

Loud the motley crowd were laughing at the strange,
ungirlish freak;
And the boy was scared and panting, and so dashed he
could not speak.
And, "Miss, I have good apples," a bolder lad did cry,
But she answered, "No, I thank you," from the corner of
her eye.

With the news of loved ones absent to the dear friends
they would greet,
Searching for those who hungered for them, swift she
glided through the street;

"There is nothing worth the doing that it does not pay to try,"
Thought the little black-eyed rebel, with a twinkle in her eye.

THE TRAMP.

"WALK in," do you say? "Walk in," to me!
I'm only a ragged and shoeless tramp.
Madam, your carpets would shrink to be
Trod by a pauper, a roving scamp.
I only ask for a crust of bread,
A morsel of meat your dog can spare,
A draught from the well, and leave to spread
My meal on your lawn, in the open air.

"Walk in," again? Well, beggars, they say,
Must not be choosers, but you're too kind;
You'll wish you had sent me on my way
When you see the tracks I leave behind.
You've a pleasant smile, a motherly face.
You see I'm not used to ways polite;
I've often been kicked from door to door,
And learned that yelping dogs can bite.

"Sit down, and eat,"—to that table spread
For some more honored, expected guest!
Do you want to turn a poor tramp's head
With a glimpse at comforts of the blest?
"Welcome to all," and "God bless our home,"—
No need of those tablets on the wall;
Where doors are open to those that roam,
His choicest blessing must surely fall.

"For what we receive," I'll grateful be.
Don't say it now; let me rest awhile
In this easy-chair you have placed for me.
There's grace and blessing in your kind smile.
I cannot eat; there is something here,
Here in my throat, like a leaden ball;
And my eyes are dim. 'Tis many a year
Since these dry springs let a tear-drop fall.

"Seen better days?" Why, yes; tramps are made,
Not born to their mirey, mean estate.
God's image ne'er in the dust was laid
But by the blows of o'erwhelming fate.
I was once a man of sturdy frame,
Earnest and honest, could boast good birth;
But a fickle woman soiled my name,
And made me a worm to crawl the earth.

"Crossed in love," mum? Now you make me smile.
Are true love's crosses, then, hard to bear?
Yet you're half right—it was passion's guile
Robbed my young life of its blissful share.
I loved a maid, and I gained a mate;
I reared me a home supremely blest;
I walked the earth in my pride elate,
And joyed in the comforts that filled my nest.

But there came a call. You heard it, too;
Yonder crape-bound saber tells the tale
How civil war brought sorrow to you.
Pardon, I beg—you are turning pale;

I'm rough, you see. 'Twas a wicked thrust;
I'll go ere I deeper wound your heart.
A wretch like me you can only trust,
For a healing word, to return a smart.

"Go on!" "Go on?" Do you care to hear
More of my worthless, wretched life?
Well, I sprang at the call, and year by year
Followed the standard through blood and strife —
Followed it ever, till victory blest
Patriot zeal for its sturdy fight,
And unchained millions joyously prest
Into the gladness of liberty's light.

"And then came home?" Yes, came home to find
Treason had ravaged my peaceful nest;
For a crafty serpent had entwined
In poisonous folds the one loved best.
My wife had fled with my trusted friend,
Leaving our child to a stranger's care.
I fought the good fight; and this the end,—
For my country glory; for me despair.

Oh, yes, I worked, for I loved the child
With all the love she had turned away.
I was roughened by war; she, sweet and mild,
Out of the gloom brought a brighter day,
Till a fever-blast swept through the town.
I covered my pet with a paling face.
In vain; the angel of death swept down,
And snatched the darling from my embrace.

God knows I bowed 'neath His chastening hand,
With never a murmur of complaint.
A blighted home and a broken band,
On earth a mourner, in heaven a saint,—
'Tis the way of life; that broke me down.
The little burden, so good and fair,
Lifted above for a golden crown,
Left me a weightier cross to bear.

I tried to work, to crush out my grief
With studied stroke and frenzied zest;
But how can the wretched find relief
With none to be by his labor blest?
The noon-bell struck, a welcome pealed
To all my mates; 'twas to me a knell.
To them sweet, blissful home revealed,
But smote my heart like a sad farewell.

I forsook my tools, shook honest toil
From out my life to be borne no more.
And became a vagrant of the soil;
Yes, a tramp, to feed from door to door.
You see, I am frank. My pride has flown;
Of wretchedness I have had my fill;
Yet you are so kind, I'll frankly own,
I can neither drink nor steal nor kill.

"No hope," did you say? "No hope?" Yes, one,—
To guide my poor old blistered feet,—
That somehow, somewhere beneath yon sun,
The base despoiler I shall meet.

On his throat my fingers fastened tight,
My foot upon his cowering frame,
His blood shall my bitter wrongs requite,
And blot out the record of my shame.

"She looking on!" What! Is that your creed,—
That angel watchers surround us here?
She looking down upon such a deed!
God grant, then, that meeting be not near!
You've driven revenge from out my breast;
I'll crawl content on my wretched way.
The bullets of war should have given me rest,
And spared my comrade Harry Fay.

"His mother!" You? Yes, those are his eyes;
And that is his sabre on the wall.
Brave fellow! 'Twas in a night surprise;
I fought at his side, and saw him fall.
"Oft mentioned me?" Well, now, that was kind.
Needn't have blushed for his comrade then;
For I was as—well, never mind.
What am I now? An outcast from men.

"My home with you!" and "For Henry's sake.
Redeem all my manhood's better part!"
The chance you offer I'll gladly take;
Heaven bless your trustful mother heart!
Yes, I'll work for you; but set the task,—
Beside the forge, or behind the plow.
Yes, mother, His gracious blessing ask:
The tramp has some one to live for now!

THE CANE-BOTTOMED CHAIR.

IN tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And ragged old jacket, perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom, up four pairs of stairs,

To mount to this realm is a toil, to be sure,
But the fire there is bright, and the air rather pure;
And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
Is grand, through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is crammed in all nooks
With worthless old nickknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds, and foolish old ends,
Cheap bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from friends.

Old armor, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all cracked),
Old rickety tables, and chairs broken-backed,—
A two-penny treasury, wondrous to see,
What matter? 'Tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

No better divan need the Sultan require
Than the creaking old sofa that basks by the fire;
And 'tis wonderful, surely, what music you get
From the rickety, ramshackle, wheezy spinnet.

That praying-rug came from a Turcoman's camp;
By Tiber once twinkled that old brazen lamp;
A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn;
'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon!

Long, long through the hours and the night and the chimes.
Here we talk of old books and old friends and old times;
And we sit in a fog made of rich Latakie.
This chamber is pleasant to you, friend, and me.

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There's one that I love and cherish the best;
For the finest of couches that's padded with hair,
I never would change thee, my cane-bottomed chair!

'Tis a bandy-legged, high-shouldered, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottomed chair!

If chairs have but feeling, in holding such charms,
A thrill must have passed through your withering old arms.
I looked and I longed. I wished in despair—
I wished myself turned to a cane-bottomed chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place.
She'd a scarf on her neck and a smile on her face,—
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
As she sat there and bloomed in my cane-bottomed chair.

And so I have valued my chair ever since,
Like the shrine of a saint or the throne of a prince.
Saint Fanny, my patroness sweet, I declare
The queen of my heart and my cane-bottomed chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night, I sit here alone—
I sit here alone; but we yet are a pair—
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottomed chair.

She comes from the past, and revisits my room;
She looks, as she then did, all beauty and bloom;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair;
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottomed chair!

THE BURIAL OF MOSES.

BY Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man dug that sepulcher,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the tramping,
Or saw the train go forth;
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes when the night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun,—

Noiselessly as the spring-time
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Open their thousand leaves,—
So, without sound of music,
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle,
On gray Beth-peor's height,
Out of his rocky eyrie,
Looked on the wondrous sight.

Perchance the lion, stalking,
Still shuns the hallowed spot;
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

Lo! when the warrior dieth,
His comrades in the war,
With arms reversed, and muffled drums,
Follow the funeral car.
They show the banners taken,
They tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed,
While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
Men lay the sage to rest,
And give the bard an honored place,
With costly marble dressed,
In the great minster transept,
Where lights like glories fall,
And the choir sings, and the organ rings
Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the bravest warrior
That ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced, with his golden pen,
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
As *he* wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?
The hill side for his pall;
To lie in state while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall;
And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave;
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave,—

In that deep grave, without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again,—Oh wondrous thought!—
Before the judgment day;
And stand, with glory wrapped around,
On the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life,
With the incarnate Son of God.

O lonely tomb in Moab's land!
O dark Beth-peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace,—
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
Of him He loved so well.

GREEN APPLES.

PULL down the bough, Bob! Isn't this fun!
Now give it a shake, and—there goes one!
Now put your thumb up to the other, and see
If it isn't as mellow as mellow can be!

I know by the stripe
It must be ripe!
That's one apiece for you and me.

Green, are they? Well, no matter for that;
Sit down on the grass and we'll have a chat;
And I'll tell you what old Parson Bute
Said last Sunday of unripe fruit:
"Life," says he,
"Is a bountiful tree,
Heavily laden with beautiful fruit.

"For the youth there's love, just streaked with red,
And great joys hanging just over his head;
Happiness, honor and great estate,
For those who patiently work and wait;
Blessings," said he,
"Of every degree,
Ripening early, and ripening late.

"Take them in season, pluck and eat,
And the fruit is wholesome, and the fruit is sweet;
But, oh, my friends!" Here he gave a rap
On his desk, like a regular thunder-clap,
And made such a bang,
Old Deacon Lang
Woke up out of his Sunday nap.

"Green fruit," he said, "God would not bless;
But half life's sorrow and bitterness,
Half the evil and ache and crime,
Came from tasting before their time

The fruits Heaven sent."
Then on he went
To his fourthly and fifthly—wasn't it prime?

But I say, Bob! we fellows don't care
So much for a mouthful of apple or pear;
But what we like is the fun of the thing,
When the fresh winds blow, and the hang-birds bring
Home grubs, and sing
To their young ones, a-swing
In their basket-nest, tied up by its string.

I like apples in various ways:
They're first-rate roasted before the blaze
Of a winter fire; and, oh, my eyes!
Aren't they nice, though, made into pies?
I scarce ever saw
One, cooked or raw,
That wasn't good for a boy of my size!

But shake your fruit from the orchard-tree,
And the tune of the brook, and the hum of the bee,
And the chipmunks chippering every minute,
And the clear, sweet note of the gay little linnet,
And the grass and the flowers,
And the long summer hours,
And the flavor of sun and breeze are in it.

But this is a hard one! Why didn't we
Leave them another week on the tree?
Is yours as bitter? Give us a bite!
And the taste of it puckers
My mouth like a sucker's!
I vow, I believe the old Parson was right.

MOTHER'S FOOL.

"'TIS plain to me," said the farmer's wife,
"These boys will make their marks in life.
They never were made to handle a hoe,
And at once to college they ought to go.
Yes, John and Henry,—'tis clear to me,—
Great men in this world are sure to be;
But Tom, he's little above a fool.
So John and Henry must go to school."

"Now, really, wife," quoth Farmer Brown,
As he set his mug of cider down,
"Tom does more work in a day, for me,
Than both of his brothers do in three.
Book learnin' will never plant beans or corn,
Nor hoe potatoes—sure as you're born—
Nor mend a rood of broken fence;
For my part give me common sense."

But his wife the roost was bound to rule,
And so "the boys" were sent to school;
While Tom, of course, was left behind,
For his mother said he had no mind.

Five years at school the students spent,
Then each one into business went.
John learn to play the flute and fiddle,
And parted his hair (of course) in the middle;
Though his brother looked rather higher than he,
And hung out his shingle,—"H. Brown, M.D."
Meanwhile at home, their brother Tom
Had taken a "notion" into his head;

Though he said not a word, but trimmed his trees
And hoed his corn and sowed his peas.
But somehow, either "by hook or crook,"
He managed to read full many a book.

Well, the war broke out, and "Captain Tom"
To battle a hundred soldiers led;
And when the rebel flag went down,
Came marching home as "*General* Brown."
But he went to work on the farm again,
Planted his corn and sowed his grain,
Repaired the house and broken fence;
And people said he had common sense.

Now, common sense was rather rare,
And the state house needed a portion there.
So our "family dunce" moved into town,
And people called him "Governor Brown";
And his brothers, that went to the city school,
Came home to live with mother's fool.

THE LITTLE HERO.

NOW, lads, a short yarn I'll just spin you,
As happened on our very last run,—
'Bout a boy as a man's soul had in him,
Or else I'm a son of a gun.

From Liverpool port out three days, lads;
The good ship floating over the deep;
The skies bright with sunshine above us;
The waters beneath us, asleep.

Not a bad-tempered lubber among us.
A jollier crew never sailed,
'Cept the first mate, a bit of a savage,
But good seaman as ever was hailed.

Regulation, good order, his motto;
Strong as iron, steady as quick;
With a couple of bushy black eyebrows,
And eyes fierce as those of Old Nick.

One day he comes up from below,
A-graspin' a lad by the arm,—
A poor little ragged young urchin
As had ought to bin home to his marm.

An' the mate asks the boy, pretty roughly,
How he dared for to be stowed away,
A-cheatin' the owners and captain,
Sailin', eatin', and all without pay.

The lad had a face bright and sunny,
An' a pair of blue eyes like a girl's,
An' looks up at the scowlin' first mate, lads,
An' shakes back his long, shining curls.

An' says he, in a voice dear and pretty,
"My step-father brought me aboard,
And hid me away down the stairs there;
For to keep me he couldn't afford.

"And he told me the big ship would take me
To Halifax town,—oh, so far!
And he said, 'Now the Lord is your father,
Who lives where the good angels are.'"

"It's a lie," says the mate: "Not your father,
But some of these big skulkers aboard,
Some milk-hearted, soft-headed sailor.
Speak up, tell the truth, d'ye hear?"

"Twarn't us," growled the tars as stood round 'em—
"What's your age?" says one of the brine.
"And your name?" says another old salt fish.
Says the small chap, "I'm Frank, just turned nine,"

"Oh, my eyes!" says another bronzed seaman
To the mate, who seemed staggered hisself,
"Let him go free to old Novy Scoshy,
And I'll work out his passage myself."

"Belay," says the mate; "shut your mouth, man!
I'll sail this 'ere craft, bet your life,
An' I'll fit the lie on to you somehow,
As square as a fork fits a knife."

Then a-knitting his black brows with anger
He tumbled the poor slip below;
An' says he, "P'r'aps to-morrow'll change you,
If it don't, back to England you go."

I took him some dinner, be sure, mates,—
Just think, only nine years of age!
An' next day, just as six bells tolled,
The mate brings him up from his cage.

An' he plants him before us amidships,
His eyes like two coals all alight;
An' he says, through his teeth, mad with passion,
An' his hand lifted ready to smite.

"Tell the truth, lad, and then I'll forgive you;
But the truth I will have. Speak it out.
It wasn't your father as brought you,
But some of these men here about."

Then that pair o'blue eyes, bright and winning,
Clear and shining with innocent youth,
Looks up at the mate's bushy eyebrows,
An', says he, "Sir, I've told you the truth."

'Twarn't no use; the mate didn't believe him,
Though every man else did, aboard.
With rough hand, by the collar he seized him,
And cried, "You shall hang, by the Lord."

An' he snatched his watch out of his pocket,
Just as if he'd been drawin' a knife.
"If in ten minutes more you don't speak, lad,
There's the rope, and good-by to your life."

There! you never see such a sight, mates,
As that boy with his bright, pretty face,—
Proud, though, and steady with courage,
Never thinking of asking for grace.

Eight minutes went by all in silence.
Says the mate then, "Speak, lad, say your say."
His eyes slowly filling with tear-drops,
He faltering says, "May I pray?"

I'm a rough and hard old tarpa'lin
As any "blue-jacket" afloat;
But the salt water springs to my eyes, lads,
And I felt my heart rise in my throat.

The mate kind o' trembled an' shivered,
And nodded his head in reply;
And his cheek went all white, of a sudden,
And the hot light was quenched in his eye;

Tho' he stood like a figure of marble,
With his watch tightly grasped in his hand,
An' the passengers all still around him;
Ne'er the like was on sea or on land.

An' the little chap kneels on the deck there,
An' his hands he clasps over his breast,
As he must ha' done often at home, lads,
At night-time, when going to rest.

And soft come the first words, "Our Father,"
Low and soft from the dear baby-lip;
But, low as they were, heard like trumpet
By each true man aboard of that ship.

Ev'ry bit of that prayer, mates, he goes through,
To, "Forever and ever. Amen."
And for all the bright gold of the Indies,
I wouldn't ha' heard it again!

And, says he, when he finished, uprising
An' lifting his blue eyes above,
"Dear Lord Jesus, oh, take me to heaven,
Back again to my own mother's love!"

For a minute or two, like a magic,
We stood every man like the dead.
Then back to the mate's face comes running
The life-blood again, warm and red.

Off his feet was that lad sudden lifted,
And clasped to the mate's rugged breast;
And his husky voice muttered "God bless you."
As his lips to his forehead he pressed.

If the ship hadn't been a good sailer,
And gone by herself right along,
All had gone to Old Davy; for all, lads,
Was gathered 'round in that throng.

Like a man, says the mate, "God forgive me,
That ever I used you so hard.
It's myself as had ought to be strung up,
Taut and sure, to that ugly old yard."

"You believe me then?" said the youngster.
"Believe you!" He kissed him once more.
"You'd have laid down your life for the truth, lad.
Believe you! From now, evermore!"

An' p'r'aps, mates, he wasn't thought much on,
All that day and the rest of the trip;
P'r'aps he paid after all for his passage;
P'r'aps he wasn't the pet of the ship.

An' if that little chap ain't a model,
For all, young or old, short or tall,
And if that ain't the stuff to make men of,
Old Ben, he knows naught, after all.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

The following is pronounced by the Westminster *Review* to be unquestionably the finest American poem ever written.

WITHIN his sober realm of leafless trees,
The russet year inhaled the dreamy air,
Like some tanned reaper in his hour of ease,
When all the fields are lying brown and bare.

The gray barns looking from their hazy hills
O'er the dim waters widening in the vales,
Sent down the air a greeting to the mills,
On the dull thunder of alternate flails.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,
The hills seemed farther and the streams sang low;
As in a dream the distant woodman hewed
His winter log with many a muffled blow.

The embattled forests, erewhile armed in gold,
Their banners bright with every martial hue,
Now stood, like some sad beaten host of old,
Withdrawn afar in Time's remotest blue.

On slumb'rous wings the vulture tried his flight,
The dove scarce heard his sighing mate's complaint,
And, like a star slow drowning in the light,
The village church-vane seemed to pale and faint.

The sentinel-cock upon the hill-side crew,
Crew thrice, and all was stiller than before;
Silent till some replying wanderer blew
His alien horn, and then was heard no more.

Where erst the jay within the elm's tall crest
Made garrulous trouble 'round the unfledged young;
And where the oriole hung her swaying nest
By every light wind like a censer swung;

Where sang the noisy masons of the eves,
The busy swallows circling ever near,
Foreboding, as the rustic mind believes,
An early harvest and a plenteous year.

Where every bird which charmed the vernal feast
Shook the sweet slumber from its wings at morn,
To warn the reaper of the rosy east—
All now was songless, empty and forlorn.

Alone, from out the stubble piped the quail,
And croaked the crow through all the dreamy gloom;
Alone the pheasant, drumming in the vale,
Made echo to the distant cottage loom.

There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers;
The spiders wove their thin shrouds night by night;
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,
Sailed slowly by—passed noiseless out of sight.

Amid all this, in this most cheerless air,
And where the woodbine sheds upon the porch
Its crimson leaves, as if the year stood there
Firing the floor with his inverted torch,—

Amid all this, the center of the scene,
The white-haired matron, with monotonous tread,
Plied her swift wheel, and with her joyless mien
Sat like a Fate, and watched the flying thread.

She had known sorrow,—he had walked with her,
Oft supped, and broke the bitter ashen crust;
And in the dead leaves still she heard the stir
Of his black mantle trailing in the dust.

While yet her cheek was bright with summer bloom,
Her country summoned, and she gave her all;
And twice war bowed to her his sable plume—
Re-gave the swords to rust upon her wall.

Re-gave the swords—but not the hand that drew,
And struck for liberty its dying blow;
Nor him who, to his sire and country true,
Fell, mid the ranks of the invading foe.

Long, but not loud, the droning wheel went on,
Like the low murmur of a hive at noon;
Long, but not loud, the memory of the gone
Breathed through her lips a sad and tremulous tune.

At last the thread was snapped—her head was bowed:
Life dropped the distaff through his hands serene;
And loving neighbors smoothed her careful shroud—
While Death and Winter closed the autumn scene.

THE OLD WIFE'S KISS.

THE funeral services were ended; and, as the voice of prayer ceased, tears were hastily wiped from wet cheeks, and long-drawn sighs relieved suppressed and choking sobs, as the mourners prepared to take leave of the corpse. It was an old man who lay there, robed for the grave. More than three-score years had whitened those locks, and furrowed that brow, and made those stiff

limbs weary of life's journey, and the more willing to be at rest where weariness is no longer a burden.

The aged have few to weep for them when they die. The most of those who would have mourned their loss have gone to the grave before them; harps that would have sighed sad harmonies are shattered and gone; and the few that remain are looking cradleward, rather than to life's closing goal; are bound to and living in the generation rising, more than the generation departing. Youth and beauty have many admirers while living, — have many mourners when dying, — and many tearful ones bend over their coffined clay, many sad hearts follow in their funeral train; but age has few admirers, few mourners.

This was an old man, and the circle of mourners was small: two children, who had themselves passed the middle of life, and who had children of their own to care for and be cared for by them. Besides these, and a few friends who had seen and visited him while he was sick, and possibly had known him for a few years, there were none others to shed a tear, except his old wife; and of this small company, the old wife seemed to be the only heart-mourner. It is respectful for his friends to be sad a few moments, till the service is performed and the hearse out of sight. It is very proper and suitable for children, who have outgrown the fervency and affection of youth, to shed tears when an aged parent says farewell, and lies down to quiet slumber. Some regrets, some recollection of the past, some transitory griefs, and the pangs are over.

The old wife arose with difficulty from her seat, and went to the coffin to look her last look — to take her last farewell. Through the fast falling tears she gazed long

and fondly down into the pale, unconscious face. What did she see there? Others saw nothing but the rigid features of the dead; she saw more. In every wrinkle of that brow she read the history of years; from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, in joy and sorrow, in sickness and health, it was all there; when those children, who had not quite outgrown the sympathies of childhood, were infants lying on her bosom, and every year since then—there it was. To others those dull, mute monitors were unintelligible; to her they were the alphabet of the heart, familiar as household words.

Then the future: "What will become of me? What shall I do now?" She did not say so, but she felt it. The prospect of the old wife is clouded; the home circle is broken, never to be reunited; the visions of the hearth-stone are scattered forever. Up to that hour there was a home to which the heart always turned with fondness. That magic is now sundered, the key-stone of that sacred arch has fallen, and home is nowhere this side of heaven! Shall she gather up the scattered fragments of the broken arch, make them her temple and her shrine, sit down in her chill solitude beside its expiring fires, and die? What *shall* she do now?

They gently crowded her away from the dead, and the undertaker came forward, with the coffin-lid in his hand. It is all right and proper, of course, it must be done; but to the heart-mourner it brings a kind of shudder, a thrill of agony. The undertaker stood for a moment, with a decent propriety, not wishing to manifest rude haste, but evidently desirous of being as expeditious as possible. Just as he was about to close the coffin, the old wife turned back, and stooping down, imprinted one long,

last kiss upon the cold lips of her dead husband, then staggered to her seat, buried her face in her hands, and the closing coffin hid him from her sight forever!

That kiss! fond token of affection, and of sorrow, and memory, and farewell! I have seen many kiss their dead, many such seals of love upon clay-cold lips, but never did I see one so purely sad, so simply heart-touching and hopeless as that. Or, if it had hope, it was that which looks beyond coffins, and charnel houses, and damp, dark tombs, to the joys of the home above. You would kiss the cold cheek of infancy; there is poetry; it is beauty hushed; there is romance there, for the faded flower is still beautiful. In childhood the heart yields to the stroke of sorrow, but recoils again with elastic faith, buoyant with hope; but here was no beauty, no poetry, no romance.

The heart of the old wife was like the weary swimmer, whose strength has often raised him above the stormy waves, but now, exhausted, sinks amid the surges. The temple of her earthly hopes had fallen, and what was there left for her but to sit down in despondency, among its lonely ruins, and weep and die! or, in the spirit of a better hope, await the dawning of another day, when a Hand divine shall gather its sacred dust, and rebuild for immortality its broken walls!

ONE DAY SOLITARY.

I AM all right! Good-bye, old chap!
Twenty-four hours, that won't be long;
Nothing to do but take a nap,
And—say! can a fellow sing a song?

Will the light fantastic be in order—
A pigeon-wing on your pantry floor?
What are the rules for a regular boarder?
Be quiet? All right! Cling-clang goes the door.

Clang-clink the bolts, and I am locked in;
Some pious reflection and repentance
Come next, I suppose, for I just begin
To perceive the sting in the tail of my sentence—
"One day whereof shall be solitary."
Here I am at the end of my journey,
And—well, it ain't jolly, not so very—
I'd like to throttle that sharp attorney.

He took my money, the very last dollar,
Didn't leave me so much as a dime,
Not enough to buy me a paper collar
To wear at my trial; he knew all the time
'Twas some that I got for the stolen silver.
Why hasn't he been indicted, too?
If he doesn't exactly rob and pilfer,
He lives by the plunder of them that do.

Then didn't it put me into a fury,
To see him step up, and laugh and chat
With the county attorney, and joke with the jury,
When all was over, then go back for his hat,
While Sue was sobbing to break her heart,
And all I could do was to stand and stare?
He had pleaded my cause, he had played his part,
And got his fee—and what more did he care?

It's droll to think how, just out yonder,
The world goes jogging on the same;
Old men will save, and boys will squander,
And fellows will play at the same old game
Of get-and-spend to-morrow, next year—
And drink and carouse, and who will there be
To remember a comrade buried here?
I am nothing to them, they are nothing to me.

And Sue—yes, she will forget me too,
I know; already her tears are drying.
I believe there is nothing that girl can do
So easy as laughing, and lying, and crying.
She clung to me well while there was hope,
Then broke her heart in that last wild sob;
But she ain't going to sit and mope
While I am at work on a five years' job.

They'll set me to learning a trade, no doubt,
And I must forget to speak or smile;
I shall go marching in and out,
One of a silent tramping file
Of felons, at morning, and noon and night,
Just down to the shops and back to the cells,
And work with a thief at left and right,
And feed, and sleep, and—nothing else.

Was I born for this? Will the old folks know?
I can see them now on the old home-place;
His gait is feeble, his step is slow,
There's a settled grief in his furrowed face;

While she goes wearily groping about
In a sort of dream, so bent, so sad!
But this won't do! I must sing and shout,
And forget myself, or else go mad.

I won't be foolish; although for a minute
I was there in my little room once more.
What wouldn't I give just now to be in it?
The bed is yonder, and there is the door;
The Bible is here on the neat, white stand;
The summer sweets are ripening now;
In the flickering light I reach my hand
From the window, and pluck them from the bough.

When I was a child (oh, well for me
And them if I had never been older!),
When he told me stories on his knee,
And tossed me, and carried me on his shoulder;
When she knelt down and heard my prayer,
And gave me in my bed my good-night kiss—
Did they ever think that all their care
For an only son could come to this?

Foolish again! No sense in tears
And gnashing the teeth; and yet, somehow,
I haven't thought of them so for years;
I never knew them, I think, till now.
How fondly, how blindly, they trusted me!
When I should have been in my bed asleep,
I slipped from the window, and down the tree,
And sowed for the harvest which now I reap.

And Jennie—how could I bear to leave her?
If I had but wished—but I was a fool!
My heart was filled with a thirst and a fever,
Which no sweet airs of heaven could cool.
I can hear her asking: "Have you heard?"
But mother falters and shakes her head;
"O Jennie! Jennie! never a word!
What can it mean? He must be dead!"

Light-hearted, a proud, ambitious lad,
I left my home that morning in May;
What visions, what hopes, what plans I had!
And what have I—where are they all—to-day?
Wild fellows, and wine, and debts, and gaming,
Disgrace, and the loss of place and friend;
And I was an outlaw, past reclaiming
Arrest and sentence, and—this is the end!

Five years! Shall ever I quit this prison?
Homeless, an outcast, where shall I go?
Return to them, like one arisen
From the grave that was buried long ago?
All is still; 'tis the close of the week;
I slink through the garden, I stop by the well,
I see him totter, I hear her shriek!—
What sort of a tale will I have to tell?

But here I am! What's the use of grieving?
Five years—will it be too late to begin?
Can sober thinking and honest living
Still make me the man I might have been?

I'll sleep. "Oh, would I could wake to-morrow
In that old room, to find, at last,
That all my trouble and all their sorrow
Are only a dream of the night that is past.

THE FATE OF VIRGINIA

"WHY is the forum crowded? What means this stir in Rome?"
"Claimed as a slave, a free-born maid is dragged here from her home.
On fair Virginia, Claudius has cast his eye of blight;
The tyrant's creature, Marcus, asserts an owner's right,
Oh, shame on Roman manhood! Was ever plot more clear?
But look! the maiden's father comes! Behold Virginius here!"

Straightway Virginius led the maid a little space aside,
To where the reeking shambles stood, piled up with horn and hide.
Hard by, a butcher on a block had laid his whittle down,—
Virginius caught the whittle up, and hid it in his gown.
And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, "Farewell, sweet child, farewell!
The house that was the happiest within the Roman walls,—
The house that envied not the wealth of Capua's marble halls,
Now, for the brightness of thy smile, must have eternal gloom,
And for the music of thy voice, the silence of the tomb.

"The time is come. The tyrant points his eager hand this way;
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey;
With all his wit he little deems that, spurned, betrayed, bereft,
Thy father hath, in his despair, one fearful refuge left;
He little deems that, in this hand, I clutch what still can save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;
Yea, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and blow,—
Foul outrage, which thou knowest not,—which thou shalt never know.
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me one more kiss;
And now, mine own dear little girl, there is no way but this!"
With that, he lifted high the steel, and smote her in the side,
And in her blood she sank to earth, and with one sob she died.

Then, for a little moment, all people held their breath;
And through the crowded forum was stillness as of death;
And in another moment brake forth from one and all
A cry as if the Volscians were coming o'er the wall;
Till, with white lips and bloodshot eyes, Virginius tottered nigh,
And stood before the judgment seat, and held the knife on high:

"O dwellers in the nether gloom, avengers of the slain,
By this dear blood I cry to you, do right between us twain;
And e'en as Appius Claudius hath dealt by me and mine,
Deal you by Appius Claudius and all the Claudian line!"
So spake the slayer of his child, and turned, and went his way;
But first he cast one haggard glance to where the body lay,
And writhed, and groaned a fearful groan, and then, with steadfast feet,
Strode right across the market-place unto the Sacred Street,
Then up sprang Appius Claudius: "Stop him, alive or dead!
Ten thousand pounds of copper to the man who brings his head!"
He looked upon his clients,—but none would work his will;
He looked upon his lictors,—but they trembled and stood still.
And as Virginius through the press his way in silence cleft,
Ever the mighty multitude fell back to right and left;
And he hath passed in safety unto his woful home,
And there ta'en horse to tell the camp what deeds are done in Rome.

THE PUNKIN FROST.

WHEN the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey cock,

And the clackin' of the guineas, and the cluckin' of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence,
Oh, it's then's the time a feller is a-feelin' at his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of gracious rest,
As he leaves the house bare-headed, and goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's sumphin kind o' hearty-like about the atmosphere,
When the heat of summer's over, and the coolin' fall is here—
Of course we miss the flowers and the blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds, and buzzin' of the bees;
But the air's so appetizin', and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the early autumn days
Is a picture that no painter has the colorin' to mock;
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty rustle of the tossels of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries, kind o' lonesome-like, but still
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they growed to fill.
The straw stack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;
The hosses in their stalls below, the clover overhead;

Oh, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the
shock,

PROCRUSTES' BED.

A long time ago lived Procrustes. The same
Was a dread and a terror wherever his name
Was heard, and his country was sorely afflicted
By the dreadful misdeeds to which he was addicted;
For he murdered and robbed in a horrible way!
Ah! he was a terror by night or by day,—
A terrible creature, a bold and a bad one,
And 'mong his bad habits he's said to have had one
That was worse than the rest, and a cruelly sad one;
And you, when you hear it, will surely admit
That he had not the smallest good reason for it.

He had an idea, this very bad man,
That he was the only right pattern and plan
Of stature. That one who was taller than he,
Procrustes, or shorter, must certainly be
Too short or too tall. So he said: "Let me see—
For the illy-built man who is taller or shorter
I'll do what I can, for I feel that I orter.

"I've hit the idea. I'll have me a bed
That shall measure exactly my length, from my head
To my feet, and the man who don't fit upon that
Must be a poor, miserable figure. That's flat.
And so, when they lack the proportions of beauty,
I must set them aright, for it's plainly my duty.

The man that's too short must be stretched till he'll fit,
And the man that's too long must be cut off a bit.
So I'll measure them all by this bed, and their height,
Where it differs from mine, I will quickly set right
In the way that I mention." You cannot but say
That this was a very original way
To settle the matter. No two men will be
Exactly the same in their stature. Ah! me,
But he was determined to make them agree.

And so, when his captives were fettered and brought
Into his stronghold, as quick as a thought
They were laid on that bed (he had wonderful strength),
To see if they were of the requisite length.

Such stretching, such sawing, such trimming! What pain
Did they all have to bear, the right length to attain!
"Here's a man that's too long. Cut him off!" with a shout.
"Here's a man that's too short. Stretch him out! Stretch him out!"
And when they arose from this bed, what a sight!
'Twould have made the heart ache to have seen their sad plight;

For the worst of it was that, when all was done,
They were not at all like Procrustes, not one:
There was not one like to the other, and none
Was *himself* as he was intended to be;
As bad a state, surely, as one need to see.
How they hopped, how they limped, how they hobbled about,

The man who was lopped and the fellow stretched out.
Procrustes looked on, and he said: "Without doubt,
'Tis bad; but my height is just right to a thread,
And the man is all wrong who don't fit on that bed.
Since that's beyond question, it isn't my fault
If it makes them all crippled and crooked and halt."

How long he'd have kept at this work I don't know,
But, at last, he encountered a powerful foe,
Who cleverly gave him his long-deserved blow.
He met Theseus, of Athens, one day, and they fought;
And Procrustes went down in the dust, as he ought;
For Theseus most boldly and openly said
He didn't acknowledge the right of the bed
As a standard for *him*. He declared, quite at ease:
"I've a right to be tall or be short, as I please.
Procrustes may grow to be tall as a tree,
But why should that make any difference to me?
He has made a most needless and murderous bother;
His stature is good for himself, and none other;
Besides, while he's mangled and maimed at his pleasure,
He has not brought one of them all to his measure.
Every man his own fashion of growing must keep on,
And the bed that fits *him* is the bed he must sleep on."

I do not insist that this happened just so;
It may be a fiction; but this much I know:
That, if but a tale of a dead long ago
A neat little truth lies hidden behind it,
And I think, if you look, you will certainly find it.

MY NEIGHBOR'S BABY.

ACROSS in my neighbor's window, with its drapings of satin and lace,
I see, 'neath its flowing ringlets, a baby's innocent face.
His feet, in crimson slippers, are tapping the polished glass;
And the crowd in the street look upward, and nod and smile as they pass.

Just here in my cottage window, catching flies in the sun,
With a patched and faded apron, stands my own little one.
His face is as pure and handsome as the baby's over the way,
And he keeps my heart from breaking, at my toiling every day.

Sometimes when the day is ended, and I sit in the dusk to rest,
With the face of my sleeping darling hugged close to my lonely breast,
I pray that my neighbor's baby may not catch heaven's roses all,
But that some may crown the forehead of my loved one as they fall.

And when I draw the stockings from his little weary feet,
And kiss the rosy dimples in his limbs so round and sweet,
I think of the dainty garments some little children wear,
And that my God withholds them from mine, so pure and fair.

* * * * * * * * *

May God forgive my envy—I know not what I said!

My heart is crushed and troubled,—my neighbor's boy is dead!
I saw the little coffin as they carried it out to-day:
A mother's heart is breaking in the mansion over the way.

The light is fair in my window, the flowers bloom at my door,
My boy is chasing the sunbeams that dance on the cottage floor.
The roses of health are blooming on my darling's cheek to-day;
But the baby is gone from the window of the mansion over the way.

FOREIGN VIEWS OF THE STATUE.

ON the deck of a steamer that came up the bay,
Some garrulous foreigners gathered one day,
To vent their opinions on matters and things
On this side the Atlantic,
In language pedantic
Twas much the same gathering that any ship brings.

"Ah, look!" said the Frenchman, with pride his lips curled;
"See ze Liberté Statue enlighten ze world!
Ze grandest colossal zat evair vas known!
Thus Bartholdi, he speak:
Vive la France—Amerique!
La belle France make ze statue, and God make ze stone!"

Said the Scotchman: "Na need o' yer speakin' sae free!
The thing is na sma', sir, that we canna see.

Do ye think that wi'oot ye the folk couldna tell?
Sin' 'tis Liberty's Statye,
I ken na why that ye
Did na keep it at hame to enlighten yoursel!"

The Englishman gazed through his watch-crystal eye:
"'Pon 'onor, by Jove, it is too beastly high!
A monstwosity, weally, too lawge to be seen!
In pwoportion, I say,
Its too lawge faw the bay.
So much lawger than one we've at 'ome of the Queen!"

An Italian next joined the colloquial scrimmage:
"I dress-a my monkey just like-a de image,
I call-a 'Bartholdi'——Frenchman got-a spunky—
Call-a me 'Macaroni,'
Lose-a me plenty moany!
He break-a my organ and keel-a my monkey!

"My-a broder a feesherman; here-a what he say:
No more-a he catch-a de feesh in de bay.
He drop-a de seine—he no get-a de weesh.
When he mak-a de grab-a,
Only catch-a de crab-a,
De big-a French image scare away all de feesh!"

"By the home rule!" said Pat: "and is *that* Libertee?
She's the biggest ould woman that iver I see!
Phy don't she sit down? 'Tis a shame she's to stand.
But the truth is, Oi'm twold,
That the shtone is too cowld.
Would ye moind the shillalah she howlds in her hand!"

Said the Cornishman: "Thaät's no ä 'shillalah,' ye
scaämp!
Looäks to I like Diogenes 'ere wi' 'is laämp,
Searchin' haärd fur a 'onest maän." "Faith, that is true,"
Muttered Pat, "phat ye say,
Fur he's lookin' moi way,
And by the same favor don't *recognize* you!"

Shust vait, und I dolt you," said Hans, "vat's der matter;
It vas von uf dem mermaits coomed ouwd fun der vatter:
Unt she hat noddings on; unt der vintry vint plows,
Unt fur shame, unt fur pidy,
She vent to der cidy,
Unt buyed her a suit fun der reaty-mate clo's."

"Me no sabee you foleners; too muchee talkee.
You no likee Idol, you heap takee walkee!
Him allee same Chinaman velly big Joshee.
Him Unclee Sam gal-ee;
Catch um lain, no umblallee!
Heap vellee big shirtee—me no likee washee!"

"Oh!" cried Sambo, amazed: "Dat's de cullud man's
Lor'!
He's cum back to de earf; sumfin' he's lookin' for.
Allus knowed by de halo surroundin' he's brow;
Jess you looken dat crown!
Jess you looken dat gown!
Lor' 'a' massy, I knows I's a gone nigga' now!"

Said the Yankee: "I've heard ye discussin' her figger;
And I reckon you strängers hain't seen nothin' bigger.

Wall, I hain't much on boastin', but I'll go my pile:
When you furreners cum,
You'll find her to hum!
Dew I mean what I say? Wall somewhat—I should smile!"

THE RAILROAD CROSSING.

I CAN'T tell you much about the thing, 'twas done so powerful quick;
But 'pears to me I got a most outlandish heavy lick:
It broke my leg, and tore my skulp, and jerked my arm most out.
But take a seat: I'll try and tell just how it kem about.

You see, I'd started down to town, with that 'ere team of mine,
A-haulin' down a load o' corn to Ebenezer Kline,
And drivin' slow; for, just about a day or two before,
The off horse run a splinter in his foot, and made it sore.

You know the railroad cuts across the road at Martin's Hole;
Well, thar I seed a great big sign, raised high upon a pole;
I thought I'd stop and read the thing, and find out what it said,
And so I stopped the hosses on the railroad-track, and read.

I ain't no scholar, rekollect, and so I had to spell,
I started kinder cautious like, with R-A-I- and L;
And that spelt "rail" as clear as mud; R-O-A-D was "road."
I lumped 'em: "railroad" was the word, and that 'ere much I knowed.

C-R-O and double S, with I-N-G to boot,
Made "crossing" just a plain as Noah Webster dared to do 't.
Railroad crossing"—good enough! L double O-K, "look;"
And I was lookin' all the time, and spellin' like a book.

O-U-T spelt "out" jest right; and there it was, "look out,"
I's kinder cur'us, like, to know jest what 'twas all about;
F-O-R and T-H-E; 'twas then "look out for the—"
And then I tried the next word; it commenced with E-N-G.

I'd got that fur, when suddintly there came an awful whack;
A thousand fiery thunderbolts just scooped me off the track;
The hosses went to Davy Jones, the wagon went to smash,
And I was histed seven yards above the tallest ash.

I didn't come to life ag'in fur 'bout a day or two;
But, though I'm crippled up a heap, I sorter struggled through;
It ain't the pain, nor 'tain't the loss o' that 'ere team of mine;
But, stranger, how I'd like to know the rest of that 'ere sign!

PADDY'S REFLECTIONS ON CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

SO that's Cleopathera's Needle, bedad;
An' a quare lookin' needle it is, I'll be bound;
What a powerful muscle the queen must have had
That could grasp such a weapon an' wind it around!

Imagine her sittin' there stitchin' like mad
With a needle like that in her hand! I declare
It's as big as the Round Tower of Slane, an', bedad,
It would pass for a round tower, only it's square!

The taste of her, ordherin' a needle of granite!
Begorra, the sight of it sthrikes me quite dumb!
An' look at the quare sort of figures upan it;
I wondher can these be the thracks of her thumb?

I once was astonished to hear of the faste
Cleopathera made upon pearls; but now
I declare, I would not be surprised in the laste
If ye told me the woman had swallowed a cow!

It's aisy to see why bould Cæsar should quail
In her presence an' meekly submit to her rule;
Wid a weapon like that in her fist I'll go bail
She could frighten the sowl out of big Finn MacCool!

But, Lord, what poor pigmies the women are now,
Compared with the monsthers they must have been then!
Whin the darlin's in those days would kick up a row,
Holy smoke, but it must have been hot for the men!

Just think how a chap that goes courtin' would start
If his girl was to prod him wid that in the shins!
I have often seen needles, but bouldly assart
That the needle in front of me there takes the pins!

O, sweet Cleopathera! I'm sorry you're dead;
An' whin lavin this wonderful needle behind
Had ye thought of bequathin' a spool of your thread
An' yer thimble an' scissors, it would have been kind.

But pace to your ashes, ye plague of great men,
  Yer strenth is departed, yer glory is past;
Ye'll niver wield scepter or needle again,
  An' a poor little asp did the bizness at last!

TOMMY'S PRAYER.

IN a dark and dismal alley where the sunshine never came,
Dwelt a little lad named Tommy, sickly, delicate and lame;
He had never yet been healthy, but had lain since he was born,
Dragging out his weak existence well nigh hopeless and forlorn.

He was six, was little Tommy, 'twas just five years ago
Since his drunken mother dropped him, and the babe was crippled so.
He had never known the comfort of a mother's tender care,
But her cruel blows and curses made his pain still worse to bear.

There he lay within the cellar from the morning till the night,
Starved, neglected, cursed, ill-treated, naught to make his dull life bright;
Not a single friend to love him, not a living thing to love—
For he knew not of a Saviour, or a heaven up above.

'Twas a quiet, summer evening; and the alley, too, was still;
Tommy's little heart was sinking, and he felt so lonely, till,

Floating up the quiet alley, wafted inwards from the street,
Came the sound of some one singing, sounding, oh! so clear and sweet.

Eagerly did Tommy listen as the singing nearer came—
Oh! that he could see the singer! How he wished he wasn't lame.
Then he called and shouted loudly, till the singer heard the sound,
And on noting whence it issued, soon the little cripple cripple found.

'Twas a maiden rough and rugged, hair unkempt, and naked feet,
All her garments torn and ragged, her appearance far from neat;
"So yer called me," said the maiden, "wonder wot yer wants o' me;
Most folks call me Singing Jessie; wot may your name chance to be?"

"My name's Tommy; I'm a cripple, and I want to hear you sing,
For it makes me feel so happy—sing me something, anything."
Jessie laughed, and answered, smiling, "I can't stay here very long,
But I'll sing a hymn to please you, wot I calls the 'Glory song.'"

Then she sang to him of Heaven, pearly gates, and streets of gold,
Where the happy angel children are not starved or nipped with cold;

But where happiness and gladness never can decrease or end,
And where kind and loving Jesus is their Sovereign and their Friend.

Oh! how Tommy's eyes did glisten as he drank in every word
As it fell from "Singing Jessie"—was it true, what he had heard?
And so anxiously he asked her: "Is there really such a place?"
And a tear began to trickle down his pallid little face.

"Tommy, you're a little heathen; why, it's up beyond the sky,
And if yer will love the Saviour, yer shall go there when yer die."
"Then," said Tommy; "tell me, Jessie, how can I the Saviour love,
When I'm down in this 'ere cellar, and he's up in Heaven above?"

So the little ragged maiden who had heard at Sunday school
All about the way to Heaven, and the Christian's golden rule,
Taught the little cripple Tommy how to love, and how to pray,
Then she sang a "Song of Jesus," kissed his cheek and went away.

Tommy lay within the cellar which had grown so dark and cold,
Thinking all about the children in the streets of shining gold;

And he heeded not the darkness of that damp and chilly
room,
For the joy in Tommy's bosom could disperse the deepest
gloom.

"Oh! if I could only see it," thought the cripple, as he
lay.
"Jessie said that Jesus listens and I think I'll try and
pray";
So he put his hands together, and he closed his little eyes,
And in accents weak, yet earnest, sent this message to
the skies:

"Gentle Jesus, please forgive me, as I didn't know afore,
That yer cared for little cripples who is weak and very
poor,
And I never heard of Heaven till that Jessie came to-day
And told me all about it, so I wants to try and pray

You can see me, can't yer Jesus? Jessie told me that yer
could,
And I somehow must believe it, for it seems so prime and
good;
And she told me if I loved you, I should see yer when I
die,
In the bright and happy heaven that is up beyond the sky.

"Lord, I'm only just a cripple, and I'm no use here below,
For I heard my mother whisper she'd be glad if I could
go;
And I'm cold and hungry sometimes; and I feel so lonely,
too,
Can't yer take me, gentle Jesus, up to Heaven along o'
you?

"Oh! I'd be so good and patient, and I'd never cry or fret;
And your kindness to me, Jesus, I would surely not forget;
I would love you all I know of, and would never make a noise—
Can't you find me just a corner, where I'll watch the other boys?

"Oh! I think yer'll do it, Jesus, something seems to tell me so,
For I feel so glad and happy, and I do so want to go;
How I long to see yer, Jesus, and the children all so bright!
Come and fetch me, won't yer, Jesus? Come and fetch me home to-night!"

Tommy ceased his supplication, he had told his soul's desire,
And he waited for the answer till his head began to tire;
Then he turned towards his corner, and lay huddled in a heap,
Closed his little eyes so gently, and was quickly fast asleep.

Oh, I wish that every scoffer could have seen his little face
As he lay there in the corner, in that damp and noisome place;
For his countenance was shining like an angel's, fair and bright,
And it seemed to fill the cellar with a holy, heavenly light.

He had only heard of Jesus from a ragged singing girl,
He might well have wondered, pondered, till his brain began to whirl;

But he took it as she told it, and believed it then and there,
Simply trusting in the Saviour, and his kind and tender care.

In the morning, when the mother came to wake her crippled boy,
She discovered that his features wore a look of sweetest joy,
And she shook him somewhat roughly, but the cripple's face was cold—
He had gone to join the children in the streets of shining gold.

Tommy's prayer had soon been answered, and the Angel Death had come
To remove him from his cellar, to his bright and heavenly home
Where sweet comfort, joy and gladness never can decrease or end,
And where Jesus reigns eternally, his Sovereign and his Friend.

THE WORLD.

THE world is a queer old fellow;
As you journey along by his side
You had better conceal any trouble you feel,
If you want to tickle his pride.
No matter how heavy your burden—
Don't tell about it, pray;
He will only grow colder and shrug his shoulder
And hurriedly walk away.

But carefully cover your sorrow,
And the world will be your friend.
If only you'll bury your woes and be merry
He'll cling to you close to the end.
Don't ask him to lift one finger
To lighten your burden, because
He never will share it; but silently bear it,
And he will be loud with applause.

The world is a vain old fellow;
You must laugh at his sallies of wit.
No matter how brutal, remonstrance is futile,
And frowns will not change him one whit.
And since you must journey together
Down paths where all mortal feet go,
Why, life holds more savor to keep in his favor
For he's an unmerciful foe.

ENCORE.

ENCORE.

THE THIRTY-SECOND DAY.

ON the thirty-second day of the thirteenth month of the eighth day of the week,
On the twenty-fifth hour of the sixty-first minute we'll find all things that we seek.
They are there in the limbo of Lollipop land—a cloud island resting in air,
On the Nowhere side of the Mountain of Mist in the Valley of Overthere.

On the Nowhere side of the Mountain of Mist in the Valley of Overthere,
On a solid vapor foundation of cloud are palaces grand and fair,
And there is where our dreams will come true, and the seeds of our hope will grow
On the thitherward side of the Hills of Hope, in the Hamlet of Hocus Po.

On the thitherward side of the Hills of Hope, in the Hamlet of Hocus Po,
We shall see all the things that we want to see, and know all we care to know;

For there the old men will never lament, the babies they never will squeak,
In the Cross-Road Corners of Chaosville, in the County of Hideangoseek,

In the Cross-Road Corners of Chaosville, in the County of Hideangoseek,
On the thirty-second day of the thirteenth month of the eighth day of the week,
We shall do all the things that we please to do, and accomplish whatever we try
On the sunset shore of Sometimeoruther, by the beautiful Bay of Bimeby.

EXPECTING TO GET EVEN.

NOW, Joe's a splendid fellow, but I do
Abominate his chasing after Lou!
It's miserable nonsense, if not crime,
To hang around a woman all the time!
I've called on her a dozen times a day,
And each occasion found him there. I say
He ought to have some business. I found
Him there this afternoon when I called 'round.
I wanted to inquire if Lou would go
With me this evening to see Boucicault.
I rather think his errand was the same,
But he had not proposed it when I came,
And neither of us, somehow, seemed to care
To ask her, with the other sitting there.
And so we chatted half an hour or so,
And finally, together, rose to go;

Made our farewells, and left. Up street he went,
While down the avenue my steps I bent.
Around the corner, turned and waited quite
Ten minutes, to let Joe get out of sight.
Then back to Lou, proceeded I to go,
And right before her mansion I met Joe.
We said: "Hallo!" Each muttered a deep oath,
'Twas, for a bit, embarrassing for both.
I spoke: "What, Joe! The man I wished to see!
After we parted it occurred to me
That we might take a theater in, and so
I hastened back to see if you would go;
Now come along, old fellow! Don't say nay,
We'll have some fun, to pass the time away."
Said he: "Extraordinary! I turned back
To make that very proposition, Jack!"
Each knew the other lied, but it is quite
As well to smooth these matters, as to fight.
Pretending to believe, we went, laughed, joked,
Had a good time, and neither seemed provoked.
Indeed, we are the best of friends! But still!
If either can get square, you bet he will!

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

I CAHN'T endure the stoopid, wude,
Unculchawed chap,—the vulgar boah,
Who weahs in the morning the same pair of twousers
He woah the day befoah.
It makes me mad and vewy cwoss;
With pain and grief I almost woah,
To see the next morning the same pair of twousers
He woah the day befoah!

And when I mingle with the thwong,
Down to the club or on the stweet,
It makes me fwantic that a man
Can be so doocid indiscweet,
So wough and weckless, and so wude,
I weally want to spill his goah,
When he weahs in the morning the same pair of twousers
He woah the day befoah!

Now there are deeds I can excuse,
And wongs I can forgive;
But such a cwiminal as this
Shouldn't be allowed to live!
Why, the ideah! the monstwous wetch
With wage and fuwy makes me woah,
Who weahs in the morning the same pair of twousers
He woah the day befoah!

THE BORES.

THERE'S the man who lets you shake his limpy hand—
He's a bore.
And the man who leans against you when you stand—
Get his gore.
There's the man who has a fear
That the world is, year by year,
Growing worse—perhaps he's near!
Bolt the door.

There's the fellow with conundrums quite antique—
He's a bore.
And the man who asks you "What?" whene'er you speak,
Though you roar.

There's the man who slaps your back
With a button-bursting whack—
If you think he's on your track,
Bolt the door.

There's the punster with his everlasting pun—
He's a bore.
And the man who makes alliterative "fun"—
Worse and more!
There's the man who tells the tale
That a year ago was stale—
Like as not he's out of jail,
Bolt the door.

LAND OF THE AFTERNOON.

AN old man sits in his garden chair,
Watching the sunlit western sky.
What sees he in the blue depths there,
Where only the Isles of Memory lie?
There are princely towers and castles high,
There are gardens fairer than human ken,
There are happy children thronging by,
Radiant women and stately men,
Singing with voices of sweet attune
The songs of the Land of the Afternoon.

The old man watches a form of cloud
That floats where the azure islands are,
And he sees a homestead gray and loved,
And a hand that beckons him afar.

O cheek of rose and hair of gold!
O eyes of Heaven's divinest blue!
Long have ye lain in the graveyard mold –
But love is infinite, love is true;
He will find her—yes—it must be soon;
They will meet in the Land of the Afternoon.

The sky has changed, and a wreck of cloud
Is driving athwart its troubled face;
The golden mist is a trailing shroud;
It is cold and bleak in the garden-place.
The old man smiles and droops his head,
The thin hair droops from his wrinkled brow,
The sunset radiance has spread
O'er every wasted feature now;
One sigh exhales like a breath in June—
He has found the Land of the Afternoon.

PHARISEE AND SADDUCEE.

TOGETHER to the church they went,
Both doubtless on devotion bent,
The parson preached with fluent ease
On Pharisees and Sadducees.
And as they homeward slowly walked,
The lovers on the sermon talked.
And he—he dearly loved the maid—
In soft and tender accents said,
Darling, do you think that we
Are Phariseee and Sadducee?
She flashed on him her dark brown eyes
With one swift look of vexed surprise,

And as he hastened to aver
He was her constant worshiper,
"But darling," I insist, said he,
"That you are very Phar-i-see;
I don't think you care much for me,
That makes me so Sadd-u-cee."

POLONIUS TO LAERTES.

SHAKEY, take a fader's plessing,
Take it, for you get it sheap.
Go in hot for magin' money,
Go in und mage a heap.
Don' you do no tings vot's grooked,
Don' you do no tings vot's mean—
Aber, rake right in dot boodle,
Qviet, calm und all serene.

Don' you lend your gash to no von—
Not for less dan den per cend;
Don' you make no vild oxpenses,
Dot's de vay de money vent;
Und I tells you, leedle Shakey,
Put dis varning in your ear:
Be a man of pizness honor,
Never vale but tvice a year.

THE PERSUASIVE AGENT.

HE drifted in, in a quiet way,
And he softly said what he had to say,
And we all sat still;

For his manner was bland, and his voice was mild;
He seemed like an innocent, trusting child,
How *could* we kill
A visitor who came in like that,
Who didn't forget to take off his hat,
Or wipe his feet:
Who talked in a gentle, modest way,
And softly said what he had to say
In a tone discreet?

He told of the wares he had to sell,
But so gently he told what he had to tell
That we still sat still,
For he was so quiet and so polite
That none of us, somehow, could make it seem right
To try to fill
The circumambient air with him,
Or to dislocate him limb from limb,
As we used to do
When agents called, and bothered us so
That we really sometimes didn't know
Just what we had done, till it was all O-
Ver, and we'd got through.

So he mildly sold us scissors and knives,
And matches, and hair oil, neckties and lives
Of the Presidents,
Elastics, and buttons, and needles, and thread,
And shoe strings, and pencils with movable lead,
(For thirty cents)
And when he went out, in his quiet way,
After bidding us all a soft "Good day!"

With a lightened load,
We all looked blankly at what we'd bought,
And we all exclaimed with a common thought:
"Well, I'll be blowed!"

THE TALE OF A TADPOLE.

A TADPOLE sat on a cold gray stone,
And sadly thought of his life.
"Alas! must I live all alone?" said he,
"Or shall I espouse me a wife?"

A wise old frog on the brink of the stream,
Leaned over, and said with a sigh:
"Oh, wait till you're older, my dear young friend,
You'll have better taste, by-and-by?

"Girls change, you know, and the pollywog slim,
That takes your fancy to-day,
May not be the Polly at all you'd choose
When the summer has passed away."

But the tadpole rash thought he better knew,
And married a pollywog fair;
And, before the summer was over, he sat
On the brink of that stream in despair.

For would you believe it? his fair young bride
Proved to be but a stupid frog,
With never a trace of the beauty and grace
Of young Miss Pollywog.

And although the tadpole himself had grown
Quite stout and stupid, too,
He only sees the faults of his wife
(As others sometimes do).

To all young tadpoles my moral is this:
Before you settle in life,
Be sure you know, without any doubt,
What you want in the way of a wife.

AGNES, I LOVE THEE.

I STOOD upon the ocean's briny shore,
And with a fragile reed I traced upon the sand:
"Agnes, I love thee."
The mad waves rolled by and blotted out the fair impression.
Frail reed! Cruel wave! Treacherous sand!
I'll trust ye no more!
But with a giant hand,
I'll pluck from Norway's frozen shore her tallest pine,
And dip its top into the crater of Mt. Vesuvius,
And on the high and burnished heavens I'll write:
"Agnes, I love thee."
And I would like to see any doggoned wave wash that out.

ONLY A SMILE.

'TWAS only a smile that was given
From a friend that I chanced to meet,
With a face as bright as a sunbeam,
In the busy walks of the street.
My soul was in darkness and sorrow,
And my heart all burdened with pain;
And tears to my eyelids came welling.
And I strove to stay them in vain.

'Twas only a smile that was given,
And the donor went on her way;
Yet it brought to my heart a sweetness
Through the whole of that livelong day.
'Twas a glance so tender and hopeful,
So sweet and so loving and true,
That my troubles—I quite forgot them,
And I found myself smiling, too.

THE BALLAD OF A BUTCHER AND THE DEAR LITTLE CHILDREN.

IT was a gruesome butcher,
With a countenance saturnine;
He stood at the door of his little shop;
It was the hour of nine.

The children going by to school
Looked in at the open door;
They loved to see the sausage machine,
And hear its awful roar.

The butcher he looked out and in,
Then horribly he swore,
Next yawned, then smiling, he licked his chops,
Quoth he, "Life's an awful bore!

"Now here's all these dear little children,
Some on 'em might live to be sixty;
Why shouldn't I save 'em the trouble to wunst
And chop 'em up slipperty licksty?"

So he winked to the children and beckoned them in:
"Oh, don't ye's want some candy?
But ye see ye'll have to come into the shop,
For out here it isn't handy!"

He 'ticed them into the little shop,
The machine went round and round;
And when those poor babes came out again,
They fetched ten cents a pound.

NOT WILLIN'.

SAYS bould Barney Milligan,
To Biddy McSnilligan,
"Och, faith! it's mesilf wud be loikin' a kiss."
Cries Biddy McSnilligan,
"Ye'd betther be still agin,
Oi'll not be endoorin' sich tratement as this."

"Arrah! Dearest Biddy
Be aisy, be stiddy,
Indade, it's no use to be actin' loike this;
Och! Scratch a man's nose off,
An' tear all his clo'es off,
It's a bit uv a row to be gittin a kiss."
"Go 'way, Mr. Barney,
No more of your blarney,
Or instid uv a kiss ye'll be gettin' a kick.
Ould red-headed Barney,
Yer wastin' yer blarney,
For here comes the misses! Ach! Barney, be quick!"

MAUD MULLER'S MOVING.

MAUD MULLER, on a wild March day,
Vowed she would move, the first of May.

Not but the house she occupied
With modern improvements was supplied,

But when on the paper her eyes she set
And saw the advertisements "To let,"

Her comfort died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast.

A longing that well nigh drove her mad,
For a nicer house than the one she had,

Larger, cheaper, in better repair;
Five minutes' walk from everywhere.

A basement-kitchen without a flaw,
A room for her husband's mother-in-law,

A parlor 18 x 23,
And a sunny, airy nursery.

She rented a house, by no means bad,
Yet not near so nice as the one she had.

And hunting, packing and moving day
Were enough, she said, to turn her gray.

And as on an upturned tub she sat,
In the new house, dusty, desolate,

And heard the truckman, *not* "with care,"
Dump a basket of crockery ware,

She mourned like one of all hope bereft,
For the cosy dwelling she had left,

And to herself in accents saddened,
Whispered softly, "I wish I hadn't."

Then to boss the truckman she turned her way,
Sighing, "I'll move again next May."

Alas for Muller! Alas for Maud!
For chipped veneering and shattered gaud.

Heaven pity them both, and pity us all
Whose wives to questing houses fall;

For of all sad words ever written yet,
The saddest are these: "This house to let."

A SIMPLE SIGN.

IT was in a grocer's window
That she saw a simple sign.
And she stopped and slowly read it
While her blue eyes seemed to shine.

Then with scornful lips she murmured,
As she tossed her pretty hat,
"How I wish that men were labeled
With a good plain sign, like that."

So when she had passed, I ventured
Near that favored grocer's shop,
And espied this simple legend:
"This Corn Warranted to Pop."

A LOVELY SCENE.

WE stood at the bars as the sun went down
Behind the hills on a summer day,
Her eyes were tender, and big and brown.
Her breath as sweet as the new-mown hay.

Far from the west the faint sunshine
Glanced sparkling off her golden hair,
Those calm, deep eyes were turned toward mine,
And a look of contentment rested there.

I see her bathed in the sunlight flood,
I see her standing peacefully now;
Peacefully standing and chewing her cud,
As I rubbed her ears,—that Jersey cow.

BAD PRAYERS.

I DO not like to hear him pray
On bended knees about an hour,
For grace to spend aright the day,
Who knows his neighbor has no flour.

I'd rather see him go to mill
And buy the luckless brother bread,
And see his children eat their fill
And laugh beneath their humble shed

I do not like to hear him pray,
"Let blessings on the widow be,"
Who never seeks her home, to say,
"If want o'ertake you, come to me."

I hate the prayer so loud and long
That's offered for the orphan's weal,
By him who sees him crushed by wrong,
And only with his lips doth feel.

I do not like to hear her pray
With jeweled ear and silken dress,
Whose washerwoman toils all day,
And then is asked to work for less.

Such pious shavers I despise;
With folded hands and face demure,
They lift to heaven their "angel eyes,"
And steal the earnings of the poor.

I do not like such soulless prayers;
If wrong, I hope to be forgiven—
No angel wing them upward bears:
They're lost a million miles from eaven.

RECIPE FOR A MODERN NOVEL.

STIR in a fool to make us laugh;
Two heavy villains and a half;
A heroine with sheeny hair,
And half a dozen beaux to spare;
A mystery upon the shore;
Some bloody foot-prints on a floor;
A shrewd detective chap, who mates
Those foot-prints with the hero's eights,
And makes it squally for that gent,
Till he is proven innocent;
A brown stone front; a dingle dell;
Spice it with scandal; stir it well;
Serve it up hot;—and the book will sell.

WHERE ARE WICKED FOLKS BURIED?

"TELL me, gray-headed sexton," I said,
"Where in this field are the wicked folks laid?
I have wandered the quiet old graveyard through,
And studied the epitaphs, old and new;

But on monument, obelisk, pillar or stone
I read of no evil that men have done."

The old sexton stood by a grave newly made,
With his chin on his hand, and his hand on a spade;
I knew by the gleam of his eloquent eye
That his heart was instructing his lips to reply:

"Who is to judge when the soul takes its flight?
Who is to judge 'twixt the wrong and the right?
Which of us mortals shall dare to say
That our neighbor was wicked who died to-day?

"In our journey through life, the farther we speed
The better we learn that humanity's need
Is charity's spirit, that prompts us to find
Rather virtue than vice in the lives of our kind.

"Therefore, good deeds we record on these stones;
The evil men do, let it die with their bones.
I have labored as sexton this many a year,
But I never have buried a bad man here."

A WALTZ QUADRILLE.

THE band was playing a waltz quadrille;
I felt as light as a wind-blown feather,
As we floated away at the caller's will
Through the intricate mazy dances together.
Like a mimic army our lines were meeting,
Slowly advancing, and then retreating,
All decked in their bright array;
And back and forth to the music's rhyme
We moved together, and all the time
I knew you were going away.

The fold of your strong arm sent a thrill
From heart to brain as we gently glided,
Like leaves on the waves of that waltz quadrille;
Parted, met, and again divided.
You drifted one way and I another,
Then suddenly turning and facing each other;
Then off in the blithe chassée;
Then airily back to our places swaying,
While every beat of the music seemed saying,
That you were going away.

I said in heart, "Let us take our fill
Of mirth and pleasure, and love and laughter,
For it all must end with this waltz quadrille,
And life will ne'er be the same life after.
O! that the caller might go on calling—
O! that the music might go on falling
Like a shower of silvery spray—
While we whirled on with the vast forever,
Where no hearts break and no ties sever,
And no one goes away."

A clamor, a crash, and the band was still.
'Twas the end of the dream and the end of the measure
The last low notes of that waltz quadrille
Seemed like a dirge o'er the death of pleasure.
You said good night, and the spell was over—
Too warm for a friend and too cold for a lover—
There was nothing more to say;
But the lights looked dim and the dancers weary,
And the music was sad and the hall was dreary
After you went away.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

THERE sate a crow on a lofty tree,
Watching the world go by;
He saw a throng that swept along
With a laughter loud and high.
"In and out through the motley rout"
Pale ghosts stole on unseen;
Their hearts were longing for one sweet word
Of the love that once had been,
But never a lip there spoke their names
Never a tear was shed;
The crow looked down from his lofty tree,
"'Tis the way of the world," he said.

A singer stood in the market-place.
Singing a tender lay.
But no one heeded his sorrowful face,
No one had time to stay.
He turned away; he sang no more;
How could he sing in vain?
And then the world came to his door,
Bidding him sing again,
But he recked not whether they came or went,
He in his garret dead.
The crow looked down from his lofty tree,
"'Tis the way of the world," he said.

There sate a Queen by a cottage bed,
Spoke to the widow there:
Did she not know the same hard blow
The peasant had to bear?

And she kissed the humble peasant's brow,
And then she bent her knee:
"God of the widow help her now,
As Thou hast helpèd me,"
"Now, God, be thanked," said the old, old crow,
As he sped from his lofty bough;
"The times are ill, but there's much good still
In the way of the world, I trow."

IN ANSWER.

"MADAM, we miss the train at B——."
"But can't you make it, sir?" she gasped.
"Impossible; it leaves at three,
And we are due a quarter past."
"Is there no way? Oh, tell me then,
Are you a Christian?" "I am not."
"And are there none among the men
Who run the train?" "No—I forgot—
I think this fellow over here,
Oiling the engine claims to be."
She threw upon the engineer
A fair face white with agony.

"Are you a Christian?" "Yes, I am."
"Then, O sir, won't you pray with me,
All the long way, that God will stay,
That God will hold the train at B——?"
"'Twill do no good, it's due at three
And——" "Yes, but God can hold the train;
My dying child is calling me,
And I must see her face again.

Oh, won't you pray?" "I will," a nod
Emphatic, as he takes his place.
When Christians grasp the arm of God
They grasp the power that rules the rod.

Out from the station swept the train,
On time, swept on past wood and lea;
The engineer, with cheeks aflame,
Prayed, "O Lord, hold the train at B——,"
Then flung the throttle wide, and like
Some giant monster of the plain,
With panting sides and mighty stride,
Past hill and valley swept the train.
A half, a minute, two are gained;
Along those burnished lines of steel,
His glances leap, each nerve is strained,
And still he prays with fervent zeal.
Heart, hand and brain, with one accord,
Work while his prayer ascends to heaven,
"Just hold the train eight minutes, Lord,
And I'll make up the other seven."

With rush and roar through meadow lands,
Past cottage homes and green hillsides,
The panting thing obeys his hands,
And speeds along with giant strides.
They say an accident delayed
The train a little while; but He
Who listened while his children prayed,
In answer held the train at B——.

IN THE CATACOMBS.

NEVER lived a Yankee yet,
But was ready to bet
On the U. S. A.
If you speak of Italy's sunny clime,
"Maine kin beat it every time!"
If you tell of Ætna's fount of fire,
You rouse his ire.
In an injured way
He'll probably say,
"I don't think much of a smokin' hill,
We've got a moderate little rill
Kin make yer old volcaner still;
Pour old Niagery down the crater,
'N I guess 'twill cool her fiery nater."

You have doubtless heard of those ancient lies,
Manufactured for a prize:
The reputation of each rose higher,
As he proved himself the bigger liar.

Said an Englishman: "Only t'other day,
Sailing from Dover to Calais,
I saw a man without float or oar,
Swimming across from the English shore,
Manfully breasting the angry sea—
"Friend," said the Yankee, "that was me."

Mindful of all these thrice-told tales,
Whenever a Yankee to Europe sails,
The boys try every sort of plan
To rouse his astonishment, if they can.

Sam Brown was a fellow from way down east
Who never was "staggered" in the least.
No tale of marvelous beast or bird
Could match the stories he had heard.
No curious place or wondrous view
"Was ekil to Podunk, I tell yu."

They showed him a room where a queen had slept;
"'Twa'n't up to the tavern daddy kept."
They showed him Lucerne, But he had drunk
From the beautiful Mollichunkamunk.
They took him at last to ancient Rome,
And inveigled him into a catacomb.

Here they plied him with draughts of wine
(Though he vowed old cider was twice as fine,)
Till the fumes of Falernian filled his head,
And he slept as sound as the silent dead;
They removed a mummy to make him room,
And laid him at length in the rocky tomb.

They piled old skeletons 'round the stone,
Set a "dip" in a candlestick of bone,
And left him to slumber there alone.
Then watched from a distance the taper's gleam,
Waiting to jeer at his frightened scream,
When he should awake from his drunken dream.

After a time the Yankee woke,
But instantly saw through the flimsy joke;
So never a cry or a shout he uttered,
But solemnly rose and slowly muttered:
"I see how it is. It's the judgment day,
We've all been dead and stowed away;

All these stone furreners sleepin' yet,
An' I'm the first one up, you bet!
Can't none o' you Romans start, I wonder?
United States is ahead, by thunder!"

ONLY PLAYING.

A LITTLE old woman before me,
Went slowly down the street,
Walking as if aweary
Were her feeble, tottering feet.

From under her old poke-bonnet
I caught a gleam of snow,
And her waving cap strings floated,
Like a pennon, to and fro.

In the folds of her rusty mantle
Sudden her footstep caught,
And I sprang to keep her from falling,
With a touch as quick as thought.

When, under the old poke-bonnet,
I saw a winsome face,
Framed with the flaxen ringlets
Of my wee daughter Grace.

Mantle and cap together
Dropped off at my very feet;
And there stood the little fairy,
Beautiful, flushing, sweet!

Will it be like this, I wonder,
When at last we come to stand

On the golden ringing pavement
Of the blessed heavenly land?

Losing the rusty garments
We wore in the years of time,
Will our better selves spring backward,
Serene in a youth sublime?

Instead of the shape that hid us,
And made us old and gray,
Shall we get our child hearts back again,
With a brightness that shall stay?

I thought—but my little daughter
Slipped her dimpled hand in mine,
"I was only playing," she whispered,
"That I was ninety-nine."

A PARODY.

THE boy stood on the back-yard fence, whence all but him had fled;
The flames that lit his father's barn shone just above the shed.
One bunch of crackers in his hand, two others in his hat,
With piteous accents loud he cried, "I never thought of that!"
A bunch of crackers to the tail of one small dog he'd tied;
The dog in anguish sought the barn, and 'mid its ruins died.
The sparks flew wide, and red and hot, they lit upon that brat;
They fired the crackers in his hand, and e'en those in his hat.

Then came a burst of rattling sound—the boy! Where was he gone?
Ask of the winds that far around strewed bits of meat and bone:
And scraps of clothes, and balls, and tops, and nails, and hooks, and yarn—
The relics of that dreadful boy that burnt his father's barn.

TOTAL ANNIHILATION.

OH! he was a Bowery bootblack bold,
And his years they numbered nine;
Rough and unpolished was he, albeit
He constantly aimed to shine.

As proud as a king on his box he sat,
Munching an apple red,
While the boys of his set looked wistfully on,
And "Give us a bite!" they said.

But the bootblack smiled a lordly smile:
"No free bites here!" he cried.
Then the boys they sadly walked away,
Save one who stood at his side.

"Bill, give us the core," he whispered low.
That bootblack smiled once more,
And a mischievous dimple grew in his cheek—
"There ain't goin' to be no core!"

MILKING-TIME.

"I TELL you, Kate, that Lovejoy cow
Is worth her weight in gold;
She gives a good eight quarts o' milk,
And isn't yet five year old.

"I see young White a-comin' now;
He wants her, I know that.
Be careful, girl, you're spillin' it!
An' save some for the cat.

"Good evenin', Richard, step right in."
"I guess I couldn't, sir,
I've just come down—" "I know it, Dick,
You've took a shine to her.

"She's kind an' gentle as a lamb,
Jest where I go she follers;
And though it's cheap, I'll let her go;
She's your'n for thirty dollars.

"You'll know her clear across the farm,
By them two milk-white stars;
You needn't drive her home at night,
But jest le' down the bars.

"Then, when you've owned her, say a month,
And learnt her, as it were,
I'll bet—why, what's the matter, Dick?"
"Taint her I want—it's *her!*"

"What? not the girl! well, I'll be blessed!—
There, Kate, don't drop that pan.
You've took me mightily aback,
But then, a man's a man.

"She's your'n, my boy, but one word more:
Kate's gentle as a dove;
She'll foller you the whole world round,
For nothin' else but love.

"But never try to drive the lass;
Her natur's like her ma's.
I've allus found it worked the best
To jest le' down the bars."

VICTUALS AND DRINK.

THERE once was a woman, and what do you think,
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink;
Victuals and drink were the chief of her diet,
And yet this poor woman could never be quiet.

And were you so foolish as really to think
That all she could want was her victuals and drink?
And that while she was furnished with that sort of diet
The feeling and fancy would starve and be quiet?

Mother Goose knew far better, but thought it sufficient
To give a mere hint that the fare was deficient;
For I do not believe she could ever have meant
To imply there was reason for being content.

Yet the mass of mankind is uncommonly slow,
To acknowledge the fact it behooves them to know,
Or to learn that a woman is not like a mouse,
Needing nothing but cheese and the walls of a house.

But just take a man—shut him up for one day—
Get his hat and his cane, put them snugly away,

Give him stockings to mend and three sumptuous meals,
And then ask him at night—if you dare—how he feels.
Do you think he will quietly stick to his stocking,
While you read the news—and "Don't care about talking?"

Oh! many a woman goes starving, I ween,
Who lives in a palace and fares like a queen,
Till the famishing heart and the feverish brain
Have spelled out to life's end the long lesson of pain.

Yet stay; to my mind an uneasy suggestion
Comes up that there may be two sides to the question.
That while here and there proving inflicted privation,
The verdict must often be "Willful starvation"—
Since there are men and women would force one to think
They choose to live only on victuals and drink.

Oh! restless and craving and unsatisfied hearts!
Whence never the vulture of hunger departs!
How long on the husks of our life will ye feed,
Ignoring the soul and her famishing need?

Bethink you, when lulled in your shallow content,
'Twas to Lazarus only the angels were sent?
And 'tis he to whose lips but earth's ashes are given
For whom the full banquet is gathered in Heaven.

FATE.

"THE sky is clouded, the rocks are bare,
The spray of the tempest is white in air,
The winds are out with the waves at play,
And I shall not tempt the sea to-day.

"The trail is narrow, the wood is dim,
The panther clings to the arching limb,

And the lion's whelps are abroad at play,
And I shall not join in the chase to-day."

But the ship sailed safely over the sea,
And the hunters came from the chase in glee,
And the town that was builded upon a rock
Was swallowed up in the earthquake shock.

AIN'T HE CUTE?

ARRAYED in snow-white pants and vest
And other raiment fair to view,
I stood before my sweetheart Sue,—
The charming creature I love best.
"Tell me, and does my costume suit?"
I asked that apple of my eye,
And then the charmer made reply—
"Oh, yes, you do look awful cute!"

Although I frequently had heard
My sweetheart vent her pleasure so,
I must confess I did not know.
The meaning of that favorite word.

But presently at window side
We stood, and watched the passing throng,
And soon a donkey passed along,
With ears like sails extending wide.
And gazing at the doleful brute
My sweetheart gave a merry cry,—
I quote her language with a sigh,—
"O Charlie, ain't he awful cute?"

AN ORIGINAL LOVE STORY.

HE struggled to kiss her; she struggled the same
To prevent him, so bold and undaunted;
But as smitten by lightning, he heard her exclaim:
"Avaunt, sir!" And off he avaunted.

But when he returned, with a wild, fiendish laugh,
Showing clearly that he was affronted,
And threatened by main force to carry her off,
She cried: "Don't" And the poor fellow donted.

When he meekly approached, and got down at her feet,
Praying loud as before he had ranted,
That she would forgive him, and try to be sweet,
And said, "Can't you?"—the dear girl recanted.

Then softly he whispered: "How could you do so?
I certainly thought I was jilted;
But come thou with me, to the parson we'll go,
Say, wilt thou, my dear?" And she wilted.

Then gayly he took her to see her new home,—
A cabin by no means enchanted.
"See! Here we can live with no longing to roam,"
He said: "Shan't we, my dear?" So they shantied.

AFTER THE THEATER.

TEN dollars. Quite a sum to pay
For one who earns but four a day,
For just a single evening's fun,—
It seems so, now the thing is done.
Three for the carriage, for you know
I never could ask her to go

With that swell dress—the shade ecru,
And train strung out a yard or two—
In a plain horse car. And so nice
She looked I do not grudge the price.
Three more for seats; down center aisle,
And four rows back,—just right for style.
The curtain rose. How time will pass
While gazing through an opera-glass.
The curtain fell. Once more we stood
Outside, and then the thought of food
Itself presented. She said, yes,
She felt quite hungry. You can guess
That what we ate, with just a bit
Of rosy wine to season it,
Used up that other four. Time sped.
I took her home. Good-night was said
Then to my own home came I straight,
And here I sit and meditate.
The cash I had four hours ago
Is gone. I've naught for it to show.
Have I regrets for it? Not one.
'Twas folly, but, by Jove, 'twas fun!

THE FIRST CLOUD.

THEY stood at the altar one short year ago;
He vowed from the troubles of life to defend her,
To have her and hold her for weal or for woe—
She spoke the responses in accents most tender.

To-night, in the gloom they are sitting apart;
Oh! has all her wifely devotion been wasted?
She mopes there in silence, a pain at her heart;
The lamps are unlighted his supper untasted.

Their sky, erst all cloudless, is now overcast,
For joy there is sorrow, for gladness dejection;
The serpent has entered their Eden at last,
And left its dark trail on the flowers of affection.

Oh, well may there be in her bosom a pain.
A grief that she vainly endeavors to smother;
To-night he has told her in language quite plain,
She can't cook his meals half as well as his mother!

FROM HAND TO MOUTH.

"FROM hand to mouth," he gaily said,
And pressed her dainty finger tips,
Which salutation quickly led
To one upon her perfect lips,
As fair as roses in the South,
"From hand to mouth."

So she was won, and so was he.
'Twas something like a year ago,
And now they both are one, you see,
Although which one I hardly know.
They're living somewhere in the South
From hand to mouth.

WHAT IS HEAVEN?

"WHAT is Heaven?" I asked a little child,
"All *joy!*" and in her innocence she smiled.

I asked the aged, with her care oppressed:
"All suffering o'er, Oh! Heaven, at last, is *rest!*"

I asked the maiden, meek and tender-eyed,
"It must be *love!*" she modestly replied.

I asked the artist, who adored his art;
"Heaven is all *beauty!*" spoke his raptured heart.

I asked the poet, with his soul afire;
"'Tis glory—*glory!*" and he struck his lyre.

I asked the Christian, waiting her release;
A halo 'round her, low she murmured: "*Peace!*"

So all may look with hopeful eyes above,
'*Tis beauty, glory, joy, rest, peace and love!*

THE PARSON'S SOCIABLE.

THEY carried the pie to the parson's house
And scattered the floor with crumbs,
And marked the leaves of his choicest books
With the prints of their greasy thumbs.

They piled his dishes high and thick
With a lot of unhealthful cake,
While they gobbled the buttered toast and rolls
Which the parson's wife did make.

They hung around Clytie's classic neck
Their apple-parings, for sport,
And every one laughed when a clumsy lout
Spilt his tea in the piano-forte.

Next day the parson went down on his knees
With his wife—but not to pray;
Oh no; 'twas to scrape the grease and dirt
From the carpet and stairs away!

BUGLE SONG.

THE splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

Oh hark, oh hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, further going;
Oh sweet and far, from cliff and scar,
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

Oh love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river·
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

THE SADDEST SIGHT.

WHEN a woman her home would decorate,
She stops not at obstacles small or great;
But the funniest sight her trials afford
Is when madam essays to saw a board.

With her knee on a plank, and the plank on a chair,
She poises her saw with a knowing air,
Makes several wild rasps at the penciled line,
And is off with a whizz the reverse of fine.

With lips compressed she gets down to work,
And crosses the timbers, jerkity-jerk;
She can't keep to the line, her knee slips askew;
But she keeps to the work till the board splits in two.

She has damaged the chair, she has ruined the saw,
Her back is aching, her hands are raw,
And she finds, when she tries to fit her prize,
It's an inch too short of the requisite size.

HE NEVER TOLD A LIE.

I SAW him standing in the crowd—
A comely youth and fair!
There was a brightness in his eye,
A glory in his hair!
I saw his comrades gaze on him—
His comrades standing by.
I heard them whisper each to each,
"He never told a lie!"

I looked in wonder on that boy,
As he stood there so young:
To think that never an untruth
Was uttered by his tongue.
I thought of all the boys I'd known—
Myself among the fry,—
And knew of none that one could say,
"He never told a lie!"

I gazed upon that youth with awe
That did enchain me long:
I had not seen a boy before
So perfect and so strong.
And with something of regret
I wished that he was I,
So they might look at me and say,
"He never told a lie!"

I thought of questions very hard
For boys to answer right:
"How did you tear those pantaloons?"
"My son! what caused the fight?"
"Who left the gate ajar last night?"
"Who bit the pumpkin pie?"
What boy could answer all of these,
And never tell a lie?

I proudly took him by the hand—
My words with praise were rife;
I blessed that boy who never told
A falsehood in his life:

I told him I was proud of him—
A fellow standing by,
Informed me that *that* boy was dumb
Who never told a lie!

THE WHISTLER.

"YOU have heard," said a youth to his sweetheart who stood
While he sat on a corn-sheaf, at daylight's decline,—
"You have heard of the Danish boy's whistle of wood:
I wish that the Danish boy's whistle were mine.'

"And what would you do with it? Tell me," she said,
While an arch smile played over her beautiful face.
"I would blow it," he answered, "and then my fair maid
Would fly to my side and would there take her place."

"Is that all you wish for? Why, that may be yours
Without any magic!" the fair maiden cried.
"A favor so slight one's good nature secures";
And she playfully seated herself by his side.

"I would blow it again," said the youth; "and the charm
Would work so that not even modesty's check
Would be able to keep from my neck your white arm."
She smiled and she laid her white arm round his neck.

"Yet once more I would blow; and the music divine
Would bring me a third time an exquisite bliss,—
You would lay your fair cheek to this brown one of mine;
And your lips stealing past it would give me a kiss."

The maiden laughed out in her innocent glee,—
"What a fool of yourself with the whistle you'd make!
For only consider how silly 'twould be
To sit there and whistle for what you might take."

THE THREE FIENDS.

THERE were three demons came out of the deep—
Fiends that blighted the eyes to see;
That frightened the dreamer out of his sleep,
And chilled the heart with a sudden leap,
And numbed the brain with their stealthy creep—
A ghastly, terrible, horrible three.

"War" was one, and his sable plume
Shadowed a face that was cruel as hate;
He awakened the dawn with the sullen boom
Of murderous guns; like a pall of gloom
Hung the smoke of his breath, and pitiless doom
His mailed hands hold like a soulless fate.

Life was his meat, and his drink was gore;
Red to his knees he walked in blood;
Laughed as he raged down the carmine shore,
Raising his voice in the horrible roar
And shrieks of his victims, as more and more
They swelled the ghastly flood.

And "Rum" was another one, grisly and grim;
Crueler ten times told than you'd think;
Misery poisoned its beaker's brim,
Death eternal, and hate and sin,
Want and woe; he poured them in,
And gave to the world to drink.

The victims were numberless as the sands—
Maiden and youth and hoary age;
The wisdom and courage of many lands,
Hearts of manhood and dimpled hands—
They came to his death-feast, ghostly bands—
Weak fools and the strong-minded sage.

And the third he came with a goblin smile,
Gentle and kind he seemed to be;
But the heart of the fiend was full of guile,
In his merriest moments all the while
His thoughts were cruel, his plans were vile;
He was the worst of the three.

At feast and wedding he sat elate,
With luscious lips he kissed the bride;
He petted the little, he pleased the great,
While he wrecked the home and destroyed the state
With a sway like the rule of an iron fate,
That you couldn't resist if you tried.

O woe was the home that he entered in!
He darkened the hearthstone that he stood by;
And pale face, and wan, and thin,
Looked up in fear at his mocking grin,
And the victims knew, as they scooped him in,
They were hopeless slaves of the demon "Pie."

NO KISS.

"KISS me, Will," sang Marguerite,
To a pretty little little tune,
Holding up her dainty mouth,
Sweet as roses born in June.

Will was ten years old that day,
And he pulled her golden curls
Teasingly, and answer made:
"I'm too old—I don't kiss girls."

Ten years pass, and Marguerite
Smiles as Will kneels at her feet,
Gazing fondly in her eyes,
Praying, "Won't you kiss me, sweet?"
'Rite is seventeen to-day;
With her birthday ring she toys
For a moment, then replies:
"I'm too old—I don't kiss boys!"

A TALE OF A NOSE.

'TWAS a hard case that which happened in Lynn!
Haven't heard of it, eh? Well, then, to begin,
There's a Jew down there whom they call "Old Mose,"
Who travels about and buys old clothes.

Now Mose—which the same is short for Moses—
Had one of the biggest kind of noses;
It had a sort of an instep in it,
And he fed it with snuff about once a minute.

One day he got in a bit of a row
With a German chap who had kissed his frau,
And trying to punch him, a la Mace,
Had his nose cut off close up to his face.

He picked it up from off the ground
And quickly back in its place 'twas bound,
Keeping the bandage upon his face
Until it had fairly healed in place.

Alas for Mose! 'Twas a sad mistake
Which he in his haste that day did make;
For, to add still more to his bitter cup,
He found he had placed it wrong side up.

"There's no great loss without some gain,"
And Moses says, in a jocular vein,
He arranged it so for taking snuff,
As he never before could get enough.

One thing, by the way, he forgets to add,
Which makes the arrangement rather bad,—
Although he can take his snuff with ease,
He has to stand on his head to sneeze.

AT THE GARDEN GATE.

THEY lingered at the garden gate,
The moon was full above;
He took her darling hand in his,
The trembling little dove,
And pressed it to his fervent lips,
And softly told his love.

About her waist he placed his arm,
He called her all his own;
His heart, he said, it ever beat
For her, and her alone;
And he was happier than a king
Upon a golden throne.

"Come weal, come woe," in ardent tones
This youth continued he,

"As is the needle to the pole,
So I will constant be;
No power on earth shall tear thee, love,
Away, I swear, from me!"

From out the chamber window popped
A grizzly night-capped head;
A hoarse voice yelled: "You, Susan Jane,
Come in and go to bed!"
And that was all,—it was enough;
The young man wildly fled.

THE OPEN DOOR.

WITHIN a town of Holland once
A widow dwelt, 'tis said,
So poor, alas! her children asked
One night in vain, for bread.
But this poor woman loved the Lord,
And knew that He was good;
So, with her little ones around,
She prayed to Him for food.

When prayer was done, her oldest child—
A boy of eight years old—
Said softly, "In the Holy Book,
Dear mother, we are told
How God, with food by ravens brought,
Supplied the prophet's need."
"Yes," answered she, "but that, my son,
Was long ago, indeed."

"But, mother, God may do again
What He has done before;
And so to let the birds fly in,
I will unclose the door."
Then little Dirk, in simple faith,
Threw ope the door full wide,
So that the radiance of their lamp
Fell on the path outside.

Ere long the burgomaster passed,
And, noticing the light,
Paused to inquire why the door
Was open so at night.
'My little Dirk has done it, sir,"
The widow, smiling, said,
"That ravens might fly in to bring
My hungry children bread."

"Indeed!" the burgomaster cried,
"Then here's a raven, lad;
Come to my home, and you shall see
Where bread may soon be had."
Along the street to his own house
He quickly led the boy,
And sent him back with food that filled
His humble home with joy.

The supper ended, little Dirk
Went to the open door,
Looked up, said, "Many thanks, good Lord;"
Then shut it fast once more.

For, though no bird had entered in,
He knew that God on high
Had harkened to his mother's prayer,
And sent this full supply.

DERMOT O'DOWD.

WHEN Dermot O'Dowd coorted Molly M'Can
They were sweet as the honey and soft as the down;
But when they were wed they began to find out
That Dermot could storm, and that Molly could frown.
They would neither give in, so the neighbors gave out—
Both were hot till a coldness came over the two;
And Molly would flusther, and Dermot would blusther,
Stamp holes in the flure, and cry out, "Wirrasthru!
O murther! I'm married,
I wish I had tarried;
I'm sleepless and speechless—no word can I say.
My bed is no use;
I'll give back to the goose
The feathers I plucked on last Michaelmas day."
"Ah!" says Molly, "you once used to call me a bird,"
"Faix, you're ready enough to fly out," says he.
"You said then my eyes were as bright as the skies,
And my lips like the rose—now no longer like me."
Says Dermot, "Your eyes are as bright as the morn,
But your brow is as black as a big thunder-cloud.
If your lip is a rose, sure your tongue is a thorn
That sticks in the heart of poor Dermot O'Dowd."
Says Molly," "You once said my voice was a thrush;
But now it's a rusty old hinge with a creak."

Says Dermot, "You called me a duck when I coorted,
But now I'm a goose every day in the week.
But all husbands are geese, though our pride it may shock,
From the first 'twas ordained so by nature, I fear.
Ould Adam himself was the first of the flock,
And Eve, with her apple-sauce, cooked him, my dear."

A SIMILAR CASE.

JACK, I hear you've gone and done it,
Yes, I know; most fellows will;
Went and tried it once myself, sir,
Though you see I'm single still.
And you met her, did you tell me?
Down at Brighton, last July,
And resolved to ask the question
At a soirée? So did I.

I suppose you left the ball room
With its music and its light;
For they say love's flame is brightest
In the darkness of the night.
Well, you walked along together,
Overhead the starlit sky;
And I'll bet—old man, confess it—
You were frightened. So was I.

So you strolled along the terrace,
Saw the summer moonlight pour
All its radiance on the waters
As they rippled on the shore;

Till at length you gathered courage,
When you saw that none were nigh;
Did you draw her close and tell her
That you loved her? So did I.

Well, I needn't ask you further,
And I'm sure I wish you joy,
Think I'll wander down and see you
When you're married—eh, my boy?
When the honeymoon is over,
And you're settled down, we'll try—
What? The deuce, you say? Rejected?
You rejected? So was I!

THE SEPTEMBER GALE.

I'M not a chicken; I have seen
Full many a chill September;
And though I was a youngster then,
That gale I well remember.
The day before my kite-string snapped,
And, I my kite pursuing,
The wind whiskéd off my palm leaf hat;
For me two storms were brewing.

It came as quarrels sometimes do,
When married folks get clashing;
There was a heavy sigh or two
Before the fire was flashing;
A little stir among the clouds
Before they rent asunder;
A little rocking of the trees,
And then came on the thunder.

Lord! how the ponds and rivers boiled!
They seemed like bursting craters!
And oaks lay scattered on the ground
As if they were p'taters;
And all above was in a howl,
And all below a clatter,—
The earth was like a frying-pan,
Or some such hissing matter.

It chanced to be our washing-day,
And all our things were drying;
The storm came roaring through the lines,
And sent them all a-flying;
I saw the shirts and petticoats
Go riding off like witches;
I lost, ah! bitterly I wept,—
I lost my Sunday breeches!

I saw them straddling through the air,
Alas! too late to win them;
I saw them chase the clouds as if
The Devil had been in them.
They were my darlings and my pride,
My boyhood's only riches,—
"Farewell, farewell," I faintly cried,
"My breeches! Oh, my breeches!"

That night I saw them in my dreams;
How changed from what I knew them!
The dews had steeped their faded threads,
The wind had whistled through them;

I saw the wide and ghastly rents
  Where demon claws had torn them;
A hole was in their amplest parts,
  As if an imp had worn them.

I have had many happy years,
  And tailors kind and clever;
But those young pantaloons have gone
  Forever, and forever!
And not till time has cut the last
  Of all my earthly stitches,
This aching heart shall cease to mourn
  My loved, my long-lost breeches.

HORATIUS AT THE BRIDGE.

LARS Porsena of Clusium, by the Nine Gods he swore
  That the great house of Tarquin should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it, and named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth, to summon his array.

East and west and south and north the messengers ride fast.
And tower and town and cottage have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Eutruscan who lingers in his home
When Porsena of Clusium is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen are pouring in amain,
From many a stately market-place; from many a fruitful plain;

From many a lonely hamlet, which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest of purple Apennine.

The harvests of Arretium, this year, old men shall reap;
This year, young boys in Umbro shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna, this year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls, whose sires have marched to Rome.

And now hath every city sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand, and the horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena upon the trysting day.

But by the yellow Tiber was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign to Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city, the throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see through two long nights and days.

Now from the rock Tarpeian, could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City, they sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came with tidings of dismay.

I wis, in all the Senate, there was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached, and fast it beat, when that ill news was told.

Forthwith up rose the Consul, up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns, and hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing before the River Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess, for musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly: "The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost, naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying, all wild with haste and fear:
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul; Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward the Consul fixed his eye.
And saw the swarthy storm of dust rise fast along the sky.

But the Consul's brow was sad, and the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall, and darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge, what hope to save the town?"

Then out spoke brave Horatius, the captain of the gate:
"To every man upon this earth death cometh, soon or late.
And how can man die better than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods.

Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul, with all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me, will hold the foe in play.
In yon straight path a thousand may well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand, and keep the bridge with me?"[24]

Then out spake Spurius Lartius,—a Ramnian proud was he,—
"Lo, I will stand on thy right hand, and keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius,—of Titian blood was he,—
"I will abide on thy left side, and keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul, "as thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array, forth went the dauntless three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life, in the brave days of old.

Now while the three were tightening their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man to take in hand an ax;
And Fathers, mixed with Commons, seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above, and loosed the props below.

The three stood calm and silent, and looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter from all the vanguard rose;
And forth three chiefs came spurring before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew to win the narrow way.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus into the stream beneath;
Herminius struck at Seius, and clove him to the teeth;
At Picus brave Horatius darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms clashed in the bloody dust.

But all Etruria's noblest felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses, in the path the dauntless three.
And from the ghastly entrance, where those bold Romans stood,
The bravest shrank like boys who rouse an old bear in the wood.

But meanwhile ax and lever have manfully been plied,
And now the bridge hangs tottering above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!" loud cried the Fathers all:
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius! back, ere the ruin fall!"

"Back darted Spurius Lartius; Herminius darted back;
And, as they passed, beneath their feet they felt the timbers crack;
But when they turned their faces, and on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone, they would have crossed once more.

But, with a crash like thunder, fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck lay right athwart the stream;
And a long shout of triumph rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken when first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard, and tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded, rejoicing to be free,
And battlement, and plank, and pier whirled headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius, but constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before, and the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus, with a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena, "now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena, to Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palátinus the white porch of his home,
And he spake to the noble river that rolls by the towers of Rome.

"O Tiber! father Tiber! to whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms, take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking, sheathed the good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back, plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes, in dumb surprise, stood gazing where he sank;

And when above the surges they saw his crest appear,
Rome shouted, and e'en Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current, swollen high by months of rain;
And fast his blood was flowing; and he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor, and spent with changing blows,
And oft they thought him sinking, but still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer, in such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood safe to the landing place;
But his limbs were borne up bravely by the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber bare bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus; "will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day we should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena, "and bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;—now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers to press his gory hands.
And, now with shouts and clapping, and noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River Gate, borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land that was of public right
As much as two strong oxen could plough from morn till night;

And they made a molten image, and set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day to witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium, plain for all folks to see;
Horatius in his harness, halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written, in letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge in the brave days of old.

JUVENILES.

JUVENILES.

WHAT SHE SAID.

SHE told me sumfin' defful!
It almost made me cry!
I never will believe it,
It mus' be all a lie!
I mean she mus' be 'staken.
I know she b'oke my heart;
I never can forgive her!
That horrid Maggie Start.

Tuesdays, she does her bakin's!
An' so I fought, you see,
I'd make some fimble cookies
For Arabella's tea.
An' so I took my dollies
An' set 'em in a row,
Where they could oversee me
When I mixed up my dough.

An' when I'd wolled an' mixed it
Free minutes, or an hour,
Somehow I dwopped my woller,
An' spilt a lot of flour.

An' I was defful firsty,
  An' fought I'd help myself
To jes' a little dwop of milk
  Off from the pantry shelf.

So I weached up on tip-toe,
  But, quicker than a flash,
The horrid pan turned over,
  An' down it came ker-splash!
O then you should have seen her
  Rush frough that pantry door!
"An' this is where you be!" she said,
  "O what a lookin' floor!

"You, an' your dolls—I'll shake you all.
  I'll shake you black 'n blue!"
"You shall not touch us, Miss," I cried,
  "We're jes as good as you!
An' I will tell my mofer,
  The minute she gets home,
An' I will tell ole Santa Claus,
  An' I'll tell every one."

O then you should have heard her laugh!
  "Tell Santa Claus, indeed!
I'd like to have you find him first,
  The humbug never lived!"
"What do you mean, you Maggie Start,
  Is dear old Santa dead?"
"Old Santa never lived," she cried,
  And that is what she said.

A ROGUE.

GRANDMA was nodding, I rather think;
Harry was sly and quick as a wink;
He climbed in the back of her great arm-chair,
And nestled himself very snugly there;
Grandma's dark locks were mingled with white,
And quick this fact came to his sight;
A sharp twinge soon she felt at her hair,
And woke with a start, to find Harry there.
"Why, what are you doing, my child?" she said,
He answered, "I'se pulling a basting fread!"

GRANDPAPA'S SPECTACLES.

GRANDPAPA'S spectacles cannot be found;
He has searched all the rooms, high and low, 'round and 'round;
Now he calls to the young ones, and what does he say?
"Ten cents for the child who will find them to-day."

Then Henry and Nelly and Edward all ran,
And a most thorough hunt for the glasses began,
And dear little Nell, in her generous way,
Said: "I'll look for them, grandpa, without any pay."

All through the big Bible she searches with care
That lies on the table by grandpapa's chair;
They feel in his pockets, they peep in his hat,
They pull out the sofa, they shake out the mat.

Then down on all fours, like two good-natured bears,
Go Harry and Ned under tables and chairs,

Till, quite out of breath, Ned is heard to declare,
He believes that those glasses are *not anywhere.*

But Nelly, who, leaning on grandpapa's knee,
Was thinking most earnestly where they *could* be,
Looked suddenly up in the kind, faded eyes,
And her own shining brown ones grew big with surprise.

She slapped both her hands—all her dimples came out—
She turned to the boys with a bright, roguish shout:
"You may leave off your looking, both Harry and Ned,
For there are the glasses on grandpapa's head!"

ONE LITTLE ACT.

I SAW a man, with tottering steps,
Come down a graveled walk one day;
The honored frost of many years
Upon his scattered thin locks lay.
With trembling hands he strove to raise
The latch that held the little gate,
When rosy lips looked up and smiled,—
A silvery child-voice said, "Please wait."

A little girl oped wide the gate,
And held it till he passed quite through,
Then closed it, raising to his face
Her modest eyes of winsome blue.
"May Heaven bless you, little one,"
The old man said, with tear-wet eyes;
"Such deeds of kindness to the old
Will be rewarded in the skies."

'Twas such a little thing to do—
A moment's time it took—no more;
And then the dancing, graceful feet
Had vanished through the school-room door.
And yet I'm sure the angels smiled,
And penned it down in words of gold;
'Tis such a blessed thing to see
The young so thoughtful of the old.

SIX YEARS OLD.

O SUN! so far up in the blue sky,
O, clover! so white and so sweet,
O, little brook! shining like silver,
And running so fast past my feet,—

You don't know what strange things have happened
Since sunset and starlight last night;
Since the four-o'clocks closed their red petals,
To wake up so early and bright.

Say! what will you think when I tell you
What my dear mamma whispered to me,
When she kissed me on each cheek twice over?
You don't know what a man you may see.

O, yes! I am big and I'm heavy;
I have grown, since last night, very old,
And I'm stretched out as tall as a ladder;
Mamma says I'm too large to hold.

Sweet clover, stand still; do not blow so;
I shall whisper 'way down in your ear,
I was six years old early this morning.
Would you think so to see me, my dear?

Do you notice my pants and two pockets?
I'm so old I must dress like a man;
I must learn to read books and write letters,
And I'll write one to you when I can.

My pretty gold butterflies flying,
Little bird and my busy brown bee,
I shall never be too old to love you,
And I hope you'll always love me.

UNSATISFIED.

THERE was a little chicken that was shut up in a shell,
He thought to himself, "I'm sure I cannot tell
What I am walled in here for—a shocking coop I find,
Unfitted for a chicken with an enterprising mind."

He went out in the barnyard one lovely morn in May,
Each hen he found spring-cleaning in the only proper way;
"This yard is much too narrow—a shocking coop I find,
Unfitted for a chicken with an enterprising mind."

He crept up to the gateway and slipped betwixt a crack,
The world stretched wide before him, and just as widely back;
"This world is much too narrow—a shocking coop I find,
Unfitted for a chicken with an enterprising mind."

"I should like to have ideals, I should like to tread the stars,
To get the unattainable, and free my soul from bars;
I should like to leave this dark earth, and some other dwelling find,
More fitted for a chicken with an enterprising mind.

"There's a place where ducks and pleasure boats go sailing to and fro,
There's one world on the surface and another world below."
The little waves crept nearer and, on the brink inclined,
They swallowed up the chicken with an enterprising mind.

THE UNFINISHED PRAYER.

"NOW I lay"—say it, darling;
"Lay me," lisp'd the tiny lips
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending
O'er her folded finger tips.

"Down to sleep"—"to sleep," she murmured,
And the curly head dropped low;
"I pray the Lord"—I gently added,
You can say it all, I know."

"Pray the Lord"—the words came faintly,
Fainter still—"my soul to keep";
When the tired head fairly nodded,
And the child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened,
When I clasped her to my breast,
And the dear voice softly whispered,
"Mamma, God knows all the rest."

A STORY OF AN APPLE

LITTLE Tommy and Peter and Archy and Bob
Were walking one day, when they found
An apple; 'twas mellow and rosy and red,
And lying alone on the ground.

Said Tommy: "I'll have it." Said Peter: "'Tis mine."
Said Archy: "I've got it; so there!"
Said Bobby: "Now let us divide in four parts,
And each of us boys have a share."

"No, no!" shouted Tommy, "I'll have it myself."
Said Peter: "I want it, I say."
Said Archy: "I've got it, and I'll have it all;
I won't give a morsel away."

Then Tommy, he snatched it, and Peter, he fought,
('Tis sad and distressing to tell!)
And Archy held on with his might and his main,
Till out of his fingers it fell.

Away from the quarrelsome urchins it flew,
And then, down a green little hill
That apple it rolled, and it rolled, and it rolled
As if it would never be still.

A lazy old brindle was nipping the grass
And switching her tail at the flies,
When all of a sudden the apple rolled down
And stopped just in front of her eyes;

She gave but a bite and a swallow or two—
That apple was seen nevermore!
"I wish," whimpered Archy and Peter and Tom,
"We'd kept it and cut it in four."

THE DEAD KITTEN.

DON'T talk to me of parties, Nan, I really cannot go;
When folks are in affliction they don't go out, you know.
I have a new brown sash, too, it seems a pity—eh?
That such a dreadful trial should have come just yesterday!

The play-house blinds are all pulled down as dark as it can be;
It looks so very solemn, and so proper, don't you see?
And I have a piece of crape pinned on every dolly's hat;
Tom says it is ridiculous for only just a cat—

But boys are all so horrid! They always, every one,
Delight in teasing little girls and kitties, "just for fun."
The way he used to pull her tail — it makes me angry now—
And scat her up the cherry tree, to make the darling "meow!"

I've had her all the summer. One day away last spring,
I heard a frightful barking, and I saw the little thing
In the corner of the fence; 'twould have made you laugh outright
To see how every hair stood out, and how she tried to fight.

I shooed the dog away, and she jumped upon my arm;
The pretty creature knew I wouldn't do her any harm.
I hugged her close, and carried her to mamma, and she said
She should be my own wee kitty, if I'd see that she was fed.

A cunning little dot she was, with silky, soft gray fur:
She'd lie for hours on my lap, and I could hear her purr;
And then she'd frolic after when I pulled a string about,
Or try to catch her tail, or roll a marble in and out.

Such a comfort she has been to me, I'm sure no one could tell,
Unless some other little girl who loves her pussy well.
I've heard about a Maltese cross, but *my* dear little kit
Was always sweet and amiable, and never cross a bit!

But oh, last week I missed her! I hunted all around.
My darling little pussy-cat was nowhere to be found.
I knelt and whispered softly, when nobody could see:
"Take care of little kitty, *please*, and bring her back to me!"

I found her lying, yesterday, behind the lower shed;
I thought my heart was broken when I found that she was dead.
Tom promised me another one, but even *he* can see
No other kitty ever will be just the same to me!

I *can't* go to your party, Nannie. —Maccaroons, you say?
And ice cream?—I know I ought to try and not give 'way;
And I feel it would be doing wrong to disappoint you so!—
Well—if I'm equal to it by to-morrow—I *may go!*

THE BIGGEST PIECE OF PIE.

ONCE when I was a little boy,
I sat me down to cry,
Because my little brother had
The biggest piece of pie.

They said I was a naughty boy,
  But I have since seen men
Behave themselves as foolishly
  As I behavèd then.

For we are often thankless for
  Rich blessings, when we sigh
To think some neighbor has
  A "bigger piece" of pie.

PERSEVERE.

THE fisher who draws in his net too soon
  Won't have any fish to sell;
The child who shuts up his book too soon
  Won't learn any lessons well.

For if you would have your learning stay,
  Be patient, don't learn too fast;
The man who travels a mile each day
  Will get 'round the world at last.

WHICH LOVED BEST.

"I LOVE you, mother," said little Ben,
  Then forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
And left her the water and wood to bring.

"I love you, mother," said rosy Nell—
"I love you better than tongue can tell";
Then she teased and pouted full half the day,
Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.

"I love you, mother," said little Fan,
"To-day I'll help you all I can;
How glad I am school doesn't keep";
So she rocked the babe till it fell asleep.

Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom,
And swept the floor and tidied the room;
Busy and happy all day was she,
Helpful and happy as child could be.

"I love you, mother," again they said,
Three little children going to bed;
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of them really loved her best?

GRANDPAPA'S SPECTACLES.

O MAMMA, what will grandpapa do!
He's gone away to Heaven,
Without the silver spectacles
That Uncle John has given?
How can he read the paper there,
Or find his hickory staff?
He'll put his coat on wrong side out,
And make the people laugh.

And when he takes the Bible down,
And wipes the dusty lid,
He'll never find his spectacles
Within its covers hid.
There won't be any little girl
He likes so well as me,
To run and hunt them up for him,—
And put them on his knee.

O, dear! he'll never find the place
About the "wicked flee,"
And how the bears ate children up,
(That used to frighten me)!
So, mamma, if you'll dress me up
Just like an angel bright,
I'll fix our ladder 'gainst the sky,
And take them up to-night.

LULU'S COMPLAINT.

I'SE a poor 'ittle sorrowful baby,
For Bidget is 'way down stairs;
My titten has scatched my fin'er,
And Dolly won't say her p'ayers.

I hain't seen my bootiful mamma
Since ever so long ado;
An' I ain't her tunninest baby
No londer, for Bidget says so.

Mamma dot anoder *new baby*,
Dod dived it—he did—yes'erday;
An' it kies, it kies—oh, so defful!
I wis' He would take it away.

I don't want no "sweet 'ittle sister";
I want my dood mamma, I do;
I want her to tiss me, and tiss me,
An' tall me her p'ecious Lulu.

I dess my dear papa will bin' me
A 'ittle dood titten some day;
Here's nurse wid my mamma's new baby;
I wis' she would tate it away.

Oh, oh! what tunnin red fin'ers!
It sees me 'ite out of its eyes;
I dess we will teep it, and dive it
Some can'y whenever it kies.

I dess I will dive it my dolly
To play wid 'mos' every day;
An' I dess, I dess—Say, Bidget,
Ask Dod not to tate it away.

JOHNNY'S OPINION OF GRANDMOTHERS.

GRANDMOTHERS are very nice folks;
They beat all the aunts in creation;
They let a chap do as he likes
And don't worry about education.

I'm sure I can't see it at all,
What a poor fellow ever could do
For apples and pennies and cakes,
Without a grandmother or two.

Grandmothers speak softly to "ma's"
To let a boy have a good time;
Sometimes they will whisper, 'tis true,
T'other way when a boy wants to climb.

Grandmothers have muffins for tea,
And pies, a whole row, in the cellar.
And they're apt (if they know it in time)
To make chicken-pies for a feller.

And if he is bad now and then,
  And makes a great racketing noise,
They only look over their specs
  And say, "Ah, these boys will be boys!

"Life is only so short at the best;
  Let the children be happy to-day."
Then they look for awhile at the sky,
  And the hills that are far, far away.

Quite often as twilight comes on,
  Grandmothers sing hymns very low
To themselves, as they rock by the fire,
  About Heaven, and when they shall go.

And then a boy, stopping to think,
  Will find a hot tear in his eye,
To know what must come at the last,
  For grandmothers all have to die.

I wish they could stay here and pray,
  For a boy needs their prayers every night.
Some boys more than others, I s'pose;
  Such fellers as me need a sight.

THE YOUNGEST TELLS HER STORY.

YOU think that *I* can't tell a story—
  Just wait—no! 'tisn't 'bout Jack Mory;
This morning it was early, quite,
I saw a little fairy knight,

With silver boots and silver shield,
A-tramping through the clover field.
He held a spear that looked like grass,
But 'twas a truly spear of glass;

A silver bugle at his lips,
He played with tiny finger tips;
He held a flag o' grass-green silk;
A branch of lilies white as milk;

He held—"How many hands had he?"
You're cruel to make fun of me!
No! I won't tell another bit;
You've lost the sweetest part of it!

MAMMA'S KISSES.

A KISS when I wake in the morning,
A kiss when I go to bed,
A kiss when I burn my fingers,
A kiss when I bump my head,

A kiss when my bath is over,
A kiss when my bath begins;
My mamma is as full of kisses—
As full as nurse is of pins.

A kiss when I play with my rattle,
A kiss when I pull her hair;
She covered me over with kisses
The day that I fell down stair.

A kiss when I give her trouble,
A kiss when I give her joy;
There's nothing like mamma's kisses
To her own little baby boy.

"WHY THE DOG'S NOSE IS ALWAYS COLD."

"WHAT makes the dog's nose always cold?"
I'll try to tell you, curls of gold,
If you will good and quiet be,
And come and stand by mamma's knee.
Well, years, and years, and years ago—
How many I don't really know—
There came a rain on sea and shore;
Its like was never seen before
Or since. It fell unceasing down,
Till all the world began to drown.
But just before it began to pour,
An old, old man—his name was Noah—
Built him an ark, that he might save
His fam'ly from a wat'ry grave;
And in it also he designed
To shelter two of every kind
Of beast. Well, dear, when it was done,
And heavy clouds obscured the sun,
The Noah folks to it quickly ran,
And then the animals began
To gravely march along in pairs;
The leopards, tigers, wolves and bears,
The deer, the hippopotamuses,
The rabbits, squirrels, elks, walruses,
The camels, goats, cats and donkeys,
The tall giraffes, the beavers, monkeys,
The rats, the big rhinoceroses,
The dromedaries and the horses,
The sheep, and mice, the kangaroos,
Hyenas, elephants, koodoos,

And hundreds more—'twould take all day,
My dear, so many names to say—
And at the very, very end
Of the procession, by his friend
And master, faithful dog was seen;
The livelong time he'd helping been
To drive the crowd of creatures in,
And now, with loud, exultant bark,
He gaily sprang aboard the Ark.
Alas! so crowded was the space
He could not in it find a place;
So, patiently he turned about—
Stood half way in and half way out.
And those extremely heavy show'rs
Decended through nine hundred hours
And more; and, darling, at the close,
Most frozen was his honest nose;
And never could it lose again
The dampness of that dreadful rain,
And that is what, my curls of gold,
Made all the doggies' noses cold!

OFF FOR SLUMBERLAND.

PURPLE waves of evening play
Upon the western shores of day,
While babies sail, so safe and free,
Over the mystic Slumber sea.

Their little boats are cradles light;
The sails are curtains pure and white;
The rudders are sweet lullabies;
The anchors, soft and sleepy sighs.

They're outward bound for Slumberland.
Where shining dreams lie on the sand,
Like whisp'ring shells that murmur low
The pretty fancies babies know.

And there among the dream-shells bright
The little ones will play all night,
Until the sleepy tide turns—then
They'll all come sailing home again!

THE ARITHMETIC LESSON.

TWO times 'leven are twenty-two;
Kitty, don't I wish 'twas you
'Stead of me had this to do!
Two times 'leven are twenty-two.

Three times 'leven are thirty-three;
Robin, in the apple tree,
I hear *you*, do you hear *me?*
Three times 'leven are thirty three.

Four times 'leven are forty-four;
How the sunbeams speck the floor!
Four times 'leven, what a bore!
Four times 'leven are forty-four.

Five times 'leven are fifty-five;
Swallows! swallows! skim and dive—
Making all the air alive—
Five times 'leven are fifty-five.

Six times 'leven are sixty-six;
Tip, for shame, sir! Pretty chicks,
Don't you mind his naught tricks!
Six times 'leven are sixty-six.

Seven times 'leven are seventy-seven;
There now, Kitty; you can't even
Say the *first*—" once 'leven is 'leven!"
Seven times 'leven are seventy-seven.

Eight times 'leven are eighty-eight,
Some one's pulling at the gate—
Hark! 'tis Bessie, sure as fate!
Eight times 'leven are eighty-eight.

Nine times 'leven are ninety-nine;
Coming, Bessie! Ain't it fine—
That's the last one in the line!
Nine times 'leven are ninety-nine.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

OVER the river, and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh,
Through the white and drifted snow.

Over the river, and through the wood;
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes,
And bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

Over the river, and through the wood,
And straight through the barn-yard gate;
We seem to go
Extremely slow;
It is so hard to wait!

Over the river, and through the wood;
Now grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for the fun!
Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the pumpkin pie!

GOOD-NIGHT.

"GOOD night!" said the plow to the weary old horse;
And Dobbin responded, "Good night!"
Then, with Tom on his back, to the farm-house he turned,
With a feeling of quiet delight.

"Good-night!" said the ox, with a comical bow,
As he turned from the heavy old cart,
Which laughed till it shook a round wheel from its side,
Then creaked out, "Good-night from my heart!"

"Good-night!" said the hen, when her supper was done,
To Fanny, who stood in the door;
"Good-night!" answered Fanny; "Come back in the morn,
And you and your chicks shall have more."

"Quack, quack!" said the duck; "I wish you all well,
Though I cannot tell what is polite."
"The will for the deed," answered Benny, the brave;
"Good-night, Madam Ducky, good-night!"

LITTLE MISS BRIER.

LITTLE Miss Brier came out of the ground;
She put out her thorns and scratched everything 'round.
"I'll just try," said she,
"How bad I can be";
At pricking and scratching there's few can match me."

Little Miss Brier was handsome and bright,
Her leaves were dark green and her flowers pure white.
But all who came nigh her
Were so worried by her,
They'd dodge out of their way to keep clear of the Brier.

Little Miss Brier was looking one day;
At her neighbor, the Violet, just over the way;
"I wonder," said she,
"That no one pets me,
While all seem so glad little Violet to see."

A sober old Linnet, who sat on a tree,
Heard the speech of the Brier, and thus answered he:
"'Tis not that she's fair,
For you may compare
In beauty with even Miss Violet there.

"But Violet is always so pleasant and kind,
So gentle in manner, so humble in mind,
Even the worms at her feet
She would never ill treat,
And to bird, bee and butterfly always is sweet."

The gardener's wife just then the pathway came down,
And the mischievous Brier caught hold of her gown:

"Oh, dear! what a tear!
My gown's spoiled, I declare;
That troublesome Brier had no business there;
Here, John, dig it up; throw it into the fire";
And that was the end of the ill-natured Brier.

ONLY A BOY.

ONLY a boy with his noise and fun,
The veriest mystery under the sun;
As brimful of mischief and wit and glee,
As ever a human frame can be,
And as hard to manage—what! ah me!
'Tis hard to tell,
Yet we love him well.

Only a boy with his fearful tread,
Who cannot be driven, must be led!
Who troubles the neighbors' dogs and cats,
And tears more clothes and spoils more hats,
Loses more kites and tops and bats
Than would stock a store
For a week or more.

Only a boy with his wild, strange ways,
With his idle hours or his busy days,
With his queer remarks and his odd replies,
Sometimes foolish and sometimes wise,
Often brilliant for one of his size,
As a meteor hurled
From the planet world.

Only a boy, who may be a man
If nature goes on with her first great plan—
If intemperance or some fatal snare,
Conspires not to rob us of this our heir,
Our blessing, our trouble, our rest, our care,
Our torment, our joy!
"Only a boy!"

GRACIE'S TEMPER.

"ONCE a gentle, snow-white birdie,
Came and built its nest,
In a spot you'd never dream of,—
In a baby's breast.

Then how happy, gentle, loving,
Grew the baby, Grace;
All the smiles and all the dimples
Brightened in her face.

But a black and ugly raven
Came one morn that way;
Came and drove the gentle birdie
From its nest away.

Ah! how frowning and unlovely
Was our Gracie then,
Until evening brought the white dove
To its nest again.

Children, this was Gracie's raven,
This her gentle dove,—
In her heart a naughty temper
Drove away the love."

APR -9 1935

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 021 100 502 6